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In Defense of His Excellency

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STANLEY S. WARREN.

IN DEFENSE OF HIS EXCELLENCY

AN INCIDENT OF POLITICAL WASHINGTON

BY STANLEY WARREN

BROADWAY PUBLISHING COMPANY AT 835 BROADWAY NEW YORK

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INTRODUCING

The Hon. Stephen Ridgway.....*of Tennessee.*
The Hon. Edward Parkins Carter,
of Massachusetts.
Senator Billinsgate.....*of the new school.*
Senator Roskin.....*of the old régime.*
Richard Du Mauriac..*Gentleman—of New York.*
Lieutenant George Van Horn.....*of the Army.*
Ensign Harry Page.....*of the Navy.*
Shelby Morris...*Secretary to Congressman Carter.*
Thomas Ashley. *Bummer,—sometime of Virginia.*
Uncle Wash.....*Servant to Stephen Ridgway*

Miss Julia Du Mauriac,
Daughter of Richard Du Mauriac.
Miss Katherine Norris,
A feminine type of Washington.
Miss Dorothy George.....*of Georgetown.*



In Defense of His Excellency.

CHAPTER I.

LAFAYETTE SQUARE—OPPOSITE THE WHITE HOUSE. NOVEMBER.

"THESE are not only undemocratic, but un-American sentiments, Steve, and you are endangering your present political status in voicing such thoughts, when even the most whimsical nonsense spoken in jest or earnest by a representative or public man is flashed over the wires, not only to his own district, but throughout the country. Besides, your position is not only illogical, but, under the American Constitution is indefensible, so be careful, old fellow, unless you are prepared to retire from public life.

"Take my advice and leave all matters pertaining to the reformation of American customs to the four hundred—or the devil, for one doesn't want to come to Congress and the other doesn't need to come."

"Nevertheless, Ned, I shall introduce and fight for just such a bill as I have outlined to you, in

the coming session; and while I realize that it may be suicidal and entail retirement from the House, as you say, yet I will have fought for what I believe to be right, and in this I think the future will bear me out. It is not the danger of having to give up my seat that I dread, but the misrepresentation—the misinterpretation and the disagreeable notoriety which makes me hesitate to father and fight for what they will be pleased to term, no doubt, 'A Bill to Establish an American Aristocracy——'

"Why, Ned, we are standing now almost in the shadow of a monument raised to the memory of one of the greatest characters in American history —Andrew Jackson—whose life was but proof of what I would have us see and teach our children—that men are born, and but rarely educated, to fill the high places, just as truly so in a republic as in the most autocratic governments of the world.

"Instead, we begin to impress upon the minds of every child born beneath the flag—almost in their infancy—that they may fill the highest places; and this is leading us to the over-education and the unfitting of the great majority of the youths of the land to take up their fathers' work, to fill stations in life that they are inherently—physically and mentally—best adapted for; and with it we instill a false pride, arousing ambitions which are but the offspring of an illogical and false training, and which so often miscarry."

"But you forget, Steve, that conditions are different here from what they are in other countries. This is a land of immense possibilities, where the servant of to-day may be the master to-morrow,

the obscure of yesterday the greatest man in the public eye to-day—the grandsire and once the tiller of the soil in the old States the petted and pampered old gentleman in the mansion of his wealthy offspring in the golden West.

"This is America, my friend; the country of great surprises, where every man is free to take a chance as the wheel of fortune turns. The poor man of to-day, the controller of great wealth to-morrow—this is the land of equality, without class or court distinction.

"These are the conditions you would qualify."

"A very pretty speech for the hustings, Ned, and a vote-catcher for the masses, but—you don't believe in it; you can't believe in it. Think for a moment—look about you! Here, everywhere, in every community, circle, section—here in Washington—logically the most democratic city in the States. Do you not find an aristocracy, and see these distinctions made? A poor imitation, a pitiful attempt, 'tis true; but here, insidious, persistent, and above all—human.

"The insignia of wealth, intellect, of power—the products of generations of civilization, aided oftentimes by accident of birth, but as inevitable as the rise and fall of the tide. It must come, and it will come to a nation, be it Republic or Monarchy, rationally by the physical and unchangeable laws of God, or by force of arms and the domination of strong men. To a republic, as history has demonstrated, through revolution and a baptism of blood, as the logical sequence of the miseducation of her young men and women, whose places, whose natural tendencies, and whose hereditary taste and

inheritance have fitted them to become the producers, the bone and sinew—the children of the fields and the forest.

"Yet we say to them: 'Your places are higher than those your fathers and mothers fill.' To the boys: 'You must go to the highest institutions of learning, that you may fill the seats of the mighty.' To the girls: 'You, too, must seek the higher education, climb the social ladder, marry a man who can give you a position a little higher than God ever intended you to fill. Climb! climb! climb!' And so they go out from the homes—leave the farms, the villages, the towns for the cities—but they never come back to the old homes because life in these places has become distasteful, and so they become discontented men and women; to drift, to form the nuclei, the centers around which the thousands of little whirlpools of socialism, anarchism and discontentment revolve. The fertile soil awaiting the seeds of revolution, and a dangerous element in any national crisis."

"A possible result of an improper training, I grant you, Steve, but never the danger you depict in this land of democracy and constitutional equality.

"And if such a state were to be feared, how is it amenable to law? What remedies can be applied? Who will say to the American citizen, be he merchant prince or pauper: 'Your child shall be educated for this or that station in life'?

"What laws can be framed or systems inaugurated to give to each child the training or degree of learning that is best for his or her future happiness; and if such were possible, where is the public

man who dare stand for such legislation? Where, I ask? Not you or I."

"Yes, Ned, I—the representative of the most illiterate district, perhaps, in the State of Tennessee—I will stand upon the floor of the United States Congress and say to the people, you are miseducating your sons and daughters, you are over-educating the limited minds of the millions who are the safeguard of the Nation in their physical strength and their power of production. You are destroying the equilibrium between mind and muscle.

"We must have distinctive classes. We must have a nobility—if you will—based, not upon the accident of birth or inheritance of wealth, but measured by the standard of achievement in letters, in the sciences, in the arts, in statesmanship.

"Give these people an insignia, place them upon a pedestal, and instill into every American heart a respect for them. Teach every child to reverence the office of your President and of those in authority, and make every man show them the proper respect. Hedge them about with safeguards, forms and regulations that lend dignity to their office. Inaugurate court manners and princely customs, and in a little while you will find men sitting in the high places who are incorruptible, without price or prejudice, and so inspired by the dignity of office and the respect of their fellowmen that their acts and rulings will show the touch of the Master himself.

"And now back to the common people, from whom the great have often sprung. Educate them intelligently and judiciously. Give the proper ad-

vantages to those who show promise, polish to the rough diamonds, but don't—don't smooth away the rough surfaces of the stones and unfit them to grind the food of the nation and ballast the roads of commerce, to start them rolling here, there, everywhere—worthless, discontented, parasites."

"But are these conditions producing the types you picture?"

"So much so that this element has become so large and so dangerous that we can no longer afford to ignore it, for it is the largest cloud on the peaceful horizon to-day, and the foci from which at any moment may spring the cyclonic waves to sweep us into riots and revolutions. But let a lull come in this busy country of ours, a period of depression, or some great national crisis, and these idle, unbalanced agitators will set aflame the dangerous forces throughout the country, and then where will this government of ours stand—a government who hasn't thought it worth its while to instill and educate into her people a respect for those in authority who represent the power and dignity of our public office.

"Let us have freedom of speech, freedom of the press and the right to criticise our public officials, but in God's name let us not mistake this freedom for an unbridled license to damn everything that represents law and order. Let us end the source from which this class of people spring by not attempting to educate beyond what God in His infinite wisdom has decreed from the beginning of the world through the laws of nature and heredity.

"Shall we take the progeny of men but yesterday removed from the galleys, or whose forefathers

came from the unbroken wilds of Africa and who have lived in the degradation of slavery for decades and decades, and in one generation place them side by side with those who have lived amidst the civilizing influences for centuries?"

"But they have the right to these advantages under our laws."

"True, but under the inviolate laws of evolution their minds are not receptive for teachings which bring mental poise from father to son only after generations and generations of reproduction.

"Our only salvation up to the present time has been that innate sense of fear and respect for the law which has been impressed upon these people in the lands of their birth and under the most autocratic governments. Destroy this, as you are destroying it day by day, through example and precept, and we liberate the pent-up hatred of class for class, which has existed for ages and ages. It is the duty of every American and for the welfare of the whole that we conform and consent to restrictions of certain freedoms and rights that we have so falsely deduced from the mighty declaration of seventy-six.

"Let us apply the rules and regulations governing the family circle to that of eighty millions of people constituting our great national family. Take the respect and authority from the fireside government and where do you trace the members of that family? To the prisons, to the madhouses, and to early graves from unrestrained excesses which they have claimed as a freedom from parental authority."

"But every day brings forth proof that those

in authority in National, State and Municipal office are not to be trusted; that they are takers of bribes and hand in hand with crime," argued Ned.

"Then let the law deal with these people as it is doing, and let every good citizen thereafter use the prerogative of a free ballot to fill their places with honest men; and let them have the respect of every citizen until they are proven otherwise.

"Don't cry thief! thief! thief! at every man in the service of the government, and honest men will aspire to serve their country. There is no truer saying than one we have in the mountains of my State, Ned: 'As well kill a dog as to give it a sheep-killing name.'

"What man is not degraded who is hailed day after day in the press and in public speech as thief, embezzler and bribe-taker?"

"Can you wonder that men who are zealous of their good names hesitate to ask for these places from their fellows, when any man is free to make insinuations, cast innuendoes in public and private speech?"

"I agree with you, Steve, that certain reforms are necessary, but public men dare not risk their political prestige or aspirations by supporting the measures you suggest."

CHAPTER II.

MISS DOROTHY GEORGE, OF GEORGETOWN.

"UPON my word, can't you see a body, Ned Carter? When did you come to town?" said Dorothy George, coming suddenly upon Carter and Ridgway. "Oh, I beg your pardon, it is the Hon. Edward Parkins Carter, I believe. I congratulate you, Ned, but honestly, I didn't believe it when I heard—thought you were abroad digging up more ancient and defunct cities. I want you to meet Mrs. Roskin," continued Dorothy.

"You know my husband, Mr. Carter, of course, as we are from neighboring states," interposed Mrs. Roskin.

"Indeed, madam, all the world knows the Senator. This is my friend and fellow member, Mr. Ridgway, Mrs. Roskin—Dorothy. Ridgway, this is the little rebel cousin of whom you heard me speak when we were together in Boston."

"Oh! then I fear Mr. Ridway knows me too well, if you have been painting me as the fire-eating Johnnie Reb."

"Indeed, Miss George, I am of your faith," assented Steve.

"Oh, yes, Dorothy, he is a Southerner, too, so let the bloody shirt wave!"

"We are just as loyal as he, aren't we, Mr. Ridgway?" declared Dorothy.

"I trust so, Dorothy," said Ned, "or else I have a sad duty to perform. You see Steve is a new member also, and I would hate to see my old classmate impeached before he can reward any of his loyal constituents or make a stir in the House—which, from the views he holds on several delicate questions, looks promising for trouble."

"Then you are going to make a speech, Mr. Ridgway?" inquired Dorothy. "Oh, I just dote on a new member's speech, they are so intense, so earnest, so simple, so—ah——"

"I don't doubt it; do you, Steve?" said Ned, laughing.

"Of course I don't mean that, Cousin Ned, but you know what I mean: naïve, like—er—like——"

"Certainly, Dorothy, like a fair young girl's graduating essay, for instance, bubbling, beautiful, nonsensical. Is it not?"

"Oh, well, I don't care; I only hope that I will be in the galleries when the Speaker recognizes the Gentleman from Massachusetts."

"I hope so, cousin, and I promise you to say as little as possible."

"Come, Dorothy, we must be going or lose our places," continued Mrs. Roskin. "You must come and see us, Mr. Carter, any Wednesday or Friday afternoon, and some evening during the session I promise that you and your cousin shall dine with me to discuss your first speech in Congress."

"Mr. Ridgway, I hope that we may see you at our home very soon."

"I thank you, madam, I shall give myself that pleasure," courteously replied Ridgway.

"We live almost in the next State, Mr. Ridgway,

but Georgetown isn't so very far, and I am sure that Cousin Ned will show you the way; won't you, Ned."

"That I will, Dorothy."

"I will see that he does, Miss George," avowed Stephen Ridgway.

"Ned, aren't you going to the first Pub?" inquired Dorothy; "it's worth the price of admission."

"Dorothy, how can you speak of the President's reception in such a manner?" said Mrs. Roskin, reprovingly.

"Yes, Miss George, you should speak more reverentially of 'His Excellency's At Home.' I think the Hon. Stephen Ridgway will have something very interesting to say to you on that subject in your first tête-à-tête," added Ned, seriously.

"Madam, I beg your pardon; and yours, Mr. Ridgway," apologized Dorothy, making a formal bow, and taking Mrs. Roskin's arm. "Good-bye, Ned Carter; come and see us, but—leave the Gentleman from Massachusetts in the city," added Dorothy as she was leaving.

"Well, Steve, there you are, there's Young America of to-day—there is your problem, and," continued Ned, "how can you legislate reverence for the dignity of office in eighty millions of people when you find here in the shadow of the Capitol, and within a stone's throw of the Executive Mansion, such indifference and lack of respect for public officialdom as my headstrong and thoughtless little cousin has just shown?"

"Legislate—no, Ned, but educate the best element—and compel the others here, and elsewhere,

to show the proper respect—not to the men who fill these places, but through them to the government which they represent. Upon this, above all things else, depend the peace and life of a Republic as does the existence of the most despotic government in all the world."

"I beg your pardon, gentlemen, for interrupting, but could you help me to a small loan?" asked a very seedy looking individual, and a character quite common to Washington streets. "I hate to ask the favor but the fact is that I have been waiting here, expecting an appointment in one of the departments which I may get at any time, and I hate to give up my chances and go back home.

"I never did this sort of thing before, gentlemen, and if you will do me the favor, and give me your card, I will return the loan in a short time, upon my honor I will."

"Come now, my man, this won't do, it's too old; we have nothing for you," said Carter.

"And you, sir?" (to Stephen Ridgway).

"Nothing, my friend."

"Very well, sir. (To Carter.) But I want you to understand that I am not your man or anybody's else, sir; I am an American and a Virginian, sir, and not any dirty politician, either. I have stood as high as you if I am on the go now."

"That's enough. Come, move on, or I shall call an officer," threatened Ned.

"I beg your pardon, Ned," interrupted Stephen Ridgway, "but—just a moment, my friend. Would you like to earn this bill? No work, you understand—just a few civil answers to as many questions—but first, an apology to this gentleman, not

for pay, of course, but—well, because you are from Virginia."

"I was rather hasty, sir, and——"

"That will do, you were simply in need of money."

"You say you are from Virginia?" inquired Stephen Ridgway.

"Yes, sir; Thomas Ashley, of Virginia."

"Raised on a farm, weren't you?"

"Well—er——" (hesitatingly).

"Truth, mind you, or no money."

"Yes, sir; but that's no disgrace."

"I trust not, my friend, or else I am ruined. And your father a farmer, of course?"

"Yes, sir."

"Your grandfather, the same, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir; he was an overseer on a plantation, but that was before the war."

"You have had fairly good advantages, haven't you; have been to school and a local college, perhaps?"

"Yes, sir."

"Left the farm, came to Washington, went to work, acquired expensive habits, spent more than you earned. Didn't like to work, anyway, got careless, and lost your place? Now, isn't that about your story?"

"That's about the truth, I reckon."

"Why don't you go back to the farm and make a good honest citizen?"

"Oh, I couldn't do that. I am not fit for that sort of work now, you know, and besides, if I should go back everybody would say that I had made a failure."

"Well, they wouldn't call you a great big success if they were to see you negotiating small loans from the veriest strangers—to buy a drink—perhaps, would they?

"One more question—a truthful answer—and the bill is yours. Look around you; over there you see a gardener busy potting his plants for the winter's storehouse. On the avenue you see a carriage just turning into the White House lot, which you recognize, of course, as that of the Secretary of State, with its occupant deep in thought and the cares of his office—hurrying to a 'Cabinet Council' perhaps.

"Now deep down in your heart, which man's work—if work can appeal to you—which work, I ask, would you prefer to do?"

"Well, sir, I used to help the folks down in Virginia do the very work the gardener is doing, and so help me, sir, I'd take his job."

"I thought so. Here is the bill, and my card, not to remind you of the loan, but for future reference; and if you should take a fancy to go back to the farm, come and see me."

"Thank you, sir."

"Well, Ned, what do you think of object lesson No. 1?" inquired Steve.

"Oh, I fancy, Steve, that you could find about ten thousand such in the city of Washington, and it is my opinion that in a very short time the majority of them will be looking for a green Congressman from Tennessee with five dollar notes to give away. Object lessons they are, but of misplaced confidence and a natural antipathy for work.

"But don't you think we have had enough phi-

losophy for one day? Suppose you come across the square with me, I want you to meet a young woman whom I believe will be more in sympathy with your beautiful theories than any one else you could know."

CHAPTER III.

THE DU MAURIACS. ACROSS THE SQUARE.

"MISS DU MAURIAC will be down presently," the maid announced.

"So you don't care to get into the social whirl, Steve? Isn't it a little bit queer, old fellow, for a Southerner to cut this out—and besides, it is one of the few recompenses one has for coming to Congress, you know.

"You will meet some very charming people here in the friends of the Du Mauriacs. They are not in public life, and are only down from New York for the winter—more for Miss Du Mauriac's pleasure, I believe, as she takes quite an interest in all the great questions of the day and that sort of thing. Should have been a man and been with us at Harvard, but did the next best thing and went to Vassar.

"She was there when we were in the law school, and one of the girls that I wanted you to know, but you were always such a queer sort that I never could get you out. Miss Du Mauriac and I were fairly good friends when I was here two years ago as secretary to the Senator.

"I am sure that you will like her, and this is one of the few homes in Washington where you will meet the true American Nobility, as you designate

all intellectual and accomplished Americans. You two might collaborate the first blue book."

"Nonsense, Ned, don't introduce the fancies and whims with the man. Let me meet your friends simply as your friend, not as some rara avis and eccentric from an obscure Southern district. At least give me a chance to pose as 'mens sanitas' until I am discovered."

"And who, may I ask," inquired Miss Du Mauriac, coming into the room, "is lost so early in the season, Mr. Carter?"

"I, Miss Du Mauriac, until I found you were in town; and my friend, Ridgway, who is also a stranger in a strange land, and whom I am going to ask you to take into the charming circle I knew so pleasantly two years ago."

"I am glad to welcome you, Mr. Ridgway,—and to renew our acquaintance, Mr. Carter, whose splendid memory for old friends and faces is, I judge, but one among other traits which assures me that I am right in offering my congratulations to a new member."

"And not amiss in extending them to my colleague, Mr. Ridgway," added Ned.

"Which I do most heartily, and trust that we may see you often this winter, Mr. Ridgway."

"I have had many reasons to feel obligated to Ned since he took me in at Cambridge, Miss Du Mauriac," replied Stephen Ridgway, "and now I shall be more than ever in his debt."

"So you were in college together, and then, of course, you are on the same side of the House?"

"No. You see, Steve is from a Southern district, and necessarily a Democrat," said Ned, jokingly.

"Oh, of course, I understand."

"Not necessarily, but providentially, Miss Du Mauriac, I should say, or else I fear I wouldn't be here," explained Stephen Ridgway.

"At any rate, Miss Du Mauriac, he has some rather undemocratic ideas," continued Ned, "and I believe that he is an exponent of some of your theories, only a little more radical, perhaps."

"You must come and see me often during the session, Mr. Ridgway, and let us discuss these undemocratic ideas Mr. Carter accuses you of having.

"I rarely attend the sessions, but am always interested in any progressive measures that are suggested, and shall enjoy having you explain them to me; for, while I am only a woman, and, therefore, a nonentity, in a legislative sense, yet I feel that I am a fairly good councillor. But I want to meet you in other ways and have you meet my friends."

"Indeed, Miss Du Mauriac," said Ned, rising, "you promise Steve so many pleasures that I fear he will neglect his official duties, so you must give us encouragement by attending the session some time."

"Shall I send you cards?" suggested Steve.

"At any rate for our maiden efforts," added Ned.

"By all means—and remember that both of you must come and see me any afternoon at your pleasure. Good-bye!"

"Who is he, and what is he?" questioned Katherine Norris, entering a few moments later unannounced—"the tall man with gray eyes and wearing a sombrero; Julia, I swear they were gray—and that brow—ugh! Did you ever wander in the dark for hours and hours to come suddenly on great

shafts of light pouring in upon you from everywhere? If you have, then you know how I felt when that man looked at me. Where did Ned Carter pick him up, I wonder?"

"Oh, you mean Mr. Ridgway," suggested Miss Du Mauriac. "He is one of the new members Mr. Carter brought to call—from a Southern district, I believe."

"Are there any men or saints here?" continued Katherine, looking about her inquiringly.

"N—no. Why?"

"Then darn these Southerners, anyway. They take too much for granted—and stare! Why, Julia, the man's eyes went all over and right through me. Anything missing from my gown?"

"Katherine Norris, you are simply awful."

"Of course he is coming back, and you will have him to dine. Now, Julia, promise me that when you have him to dinner, you will ask me and let him take me out. If he is only a handsome, impertinent nonentity I will have my revenge—but I shall be terribly disappointed. Ye gods, what metal if he is as deep as he looks. Is he a protégé of Ned Carter's?"

"I believe that they were in the law school together at Harvard. Mr. Carter seems very fond of him, and I think I shall like him."

"It might be dangerous to go as far as that, Julia, if he is the man I expect to find him," cautioned Katherine. "However, the country sends some queer specimens to Congress, and he may be one of the majority."

"You were not at the President's first?" inquired Katherine.

"No."

"Well, there were the usual numbers of sight-seers and the great unwashed. I saw Dorothy George in the receiving line, with the Army nearby —under waiting orders, I presume—and the Navy manoeuvering for position. Poor Dot, it's hard for her to choose between the two branches of the service, it seems."

"You are partial to the military, aren't you, Katherine?"

"In Washington, where one so seldom meets a man, yes. But I rather prefer a man to the arms when I get out into the strenuous world. For it seems to me that God made man to conquer by mental, rather than physical combat, and I prefer the dart from a superior mind to the rapier thrust of a skillful master at arms. It goes as deep and is bloodless."

"But such wounds never heal, dear."

"So much the better, 'tis always a ready spur to quicken the pace toward the goal of revenge."

"Katherine, don't."

"Such eyes, and that jaw," said Katherine, musingly. "Ye gods! the man could fight, or, better still, be as silent as a churchyard and ignore the devil himself."

"Miss Dorothy George, Ensign Harry Page, Lieutenant George Van Horn," anounced the butler.

"Hello, everybody!" cried Dorothy, as she rushed in.

"Julia, you have met Mr. Page and Mr. Van Horn, of course. Gentlemen, you know Katherine Norris—everybody knows Katherine Norris."

"I beg your pardon, but I have never met Miss Norris," apologized Ensign Page.

"Oh, pardon, Katherine. Miss Norris, the Navy."

"The Navy knows of Miss Norris, and I had the honor to make my first cruise in the Washington, for which, I believe Miss Norris stands godmother. Am I not right, Miss Norris?"

"Indeed, yes; and whose scuppers have been running champagne ever since, I understand."

"Believe me, Miss Norris, we waste not that much in the drinking," replied Page.

"I have heard it said, Mr. Page, that it is possible to fill a well too full," suggested Katherine.

"Really, now, Miss Norris, I don't understand."

"Well, you will later, perhaps."

"Julia, dear, remember that at the first dinner I take the new member out. Good-bye, dear. Bye, Dorothy." (Bows to the Army and Navy.)

"Ahem! Gentlemen," said Dorothy George, snatching a vase from the table a moment later, "to the Army—and the Navy as well—here's 'how,' and no elbows. Oh, rich! rich! The irrepressible Katherine!"

"But really now, Miss Dorothy, don't you think Miss Norris rude, to say the least?" insisted Page.

"Rude? Katherine Norris rude? Oh, come now, Mr. Page. Why nobody would ever accuse Katherine of rudeness. Would they, Julia?"

"Truly, Mr. Page, it's only Katherine's way."

"Wait, Page, until I give you her toast to the Army," said Van Horn.

"Won't you tell us now. Mr. Van Horn?" pleaded Dorothy.

"Well, hardly, Miss Dorothy, I would rather refer you to Miss Norris. You will pardon my rushing off like this, Miss Du Mauriac," apologized Van Horn, "but as my detail goes on at six, I have only the few minutes necessary to get over to the White House."

"You will excuse me, Miss Dorothy?"

"Oh, certainly!" said Dorothy, indifferently.

"I will join you, Van Horn, unless Miss George will let me see her safely back to Georgetown?"

"Thanks, very much, Mr. Page, but I am staying in with the Roskins' for dinner."

"Then I will say good-bye, and to you, Miss Du Mauriac."

"We are very glad to see you any time, Mr. Page—Mr. Van Horn. Good-bye."

"Now, Dorothy, we can have a nice, comfortable chat. You know that this is the first time I have seen you since I came. Who is in town that we know—but it is rather early, I believe?"

"The Clarendons are back from New Orleans, I saw Ethel at the first Tuesdays; and the McMillins are here, I believe. Of course you know the Elliotts have taken a house on the square for the winter. And Ned Carter—you remember Cousin Ned, who was here two years ago with the Senator from his State? Well, Ned is to represent his district in Congress this year. I met him this afternoon as we were going to the White House reception. Oh, he quite looks the part: top hat, modest frock, dignity everywhere, and a—a, 'Dorothy, my child' air. He was with a tall Southerner in Lafayette Square, gathering inspira-

tions from the surroundings, I presume, for their first speech. The Southerner is a new member, too,—looking his part also, with large sombrero, ministerial coat, the proverbial white tie, long hair, Southern drawl, and ah—no gun visible. His name is Ridgway—Congressman Ridgway, of Tennessee."

"Yes, Mr. Carter brought him to call this afternoon."

"Oh! Then Ned has been here! Did he meet Katherine Norris?"

"No. She came in as he was going out."

"Then that accounts for Katherine's ill-humor, I suppose? You know that Ned was very attentive two years ago."

"Don't you think that he still cares for her, Dorothy?"

"Oh, I suppose so. At any rate, his chances are better now than they were, since he has been promoted from a private secretary to a member. Yet they are poor, at that, for Katherine Norris will never capitulate to anything beneath the dignity of the Senate, or a foreign post; and it's a long way from the House to either place."

"There are young men in these places, aren't there?" inquired Julia Du Mauriac. "Besides, you don't think Katherine would let this influence her in her choice, do you?"

"Oh, no, dear, not in her choice, but in her decision," replied Dorothy. "We Washington girls, you know, are free to love any man, but are permitted to marry one of only a few, for the very good reason that one's social status here is fixed

by one's official standing, and a poor member, married, is quite different from a poor member, single, in the social world."

"This Mr. Ridgway, Dorothy; did he make a pleasing impression with you? Of course, I know how loyal you Southerners are to each other, but to me the man has a strong personality. As to his manner of dress, that I know is simply a matter of taste, and is the customary one in his part of the country, but none the less becoming to his type."

"Of which he is well aware, Julia."

"However, I think I shall like him," continued Julia Du Mauriac.

"Of course, the picture was a bit overdrawn, dear," said Dorothy, "and I suppose he has a very poor opinion of me after what I have said, but I do like him, and I am sure he will not disappoint you. I shall have him come to Georgetown to meet father and mother."

"Mrs. Roskin's carriage for Miss George!" interrupted the maid.

"Well, Julia, I must run now, as I wouldn't keep those dear old people waiting for the world."

"Come in again, soon, won't you, dear? Goodbye!" and her hand touched the bell mechanically as she stood in preoccupied thought for a moment.

"You rang, Miss?" asked the maid, entering.

"Yes. I am not at home to any one," she directed, and as she looked into the fire Katherine's words came back to her:

"Did you ever wander in the dark for hours and hours to come suddenly on great shafts of

light pouring in upon you from everywhere? If you have, then you know how I felt when that man looked at me."

"Yes, I think I shall like him," she said, sighing.

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH A MEMBER MAKES HIS FIRST SPEECH IN THE GALLERY.

WHEN the House convened on the tenth day Ridgway, as usual, was in his seat, which was in the rear row and almost jam against the wall on the minority side, owing to the overcrowded condition of the chamber.

The great clock opposite the Speaker's chair had ticked off but the first quarter of the hour since the opening and the quietude of that moment seemed to him as having been ages ago, while the noise and confusion about him assumed an almost rhythmical hum as the restless members moved about, and in and out of the room; and he sat wondering how order and work was to be brought out of this seeming chaos. He saw a man arise here and there clamoring for recognition, some of whom he recognized as new members, and noticed with some amusement and no little sympathy the embarrassment and confusion in their faces as they dropped quickly into their seats when the Speaker pounded vigorously on his desk for order, at the same time recognizing some member who had but that moment arisen to his feet and who felt certain of recognition, as he knew that his

name was on the list before the Speaker for a five or ten minute speech on the bill that was pending.

And so he sat there trying to accustom himself to this order of things, and to reconcile it to the fact that he was a part of this remarkable body, and thus far responsible for its acts, yet, realizing that practically he was without a voice in any of its decisions.

Finally he raised his eyes from the scene before him on the floor to the noisy, moving, and ever changing crowd that thronged the galleries, and that which struck him most forcibly was the conglomerate mass and general mixture of humanity. As he looked from one gallery to another he felt that no man could question the democracy of these people. Except for the two or three foreign attachés and Latin-American representatives, who sat in the Diplomatic Gallery, the crowd was typical of that beautiful and beatific picture so frequently drawn by the great advocates of social equality and brotherly love, as they sit with comfortable and luxurious surroundings in their palatial homes on a winter's evening after a particularly good dinner and speak with feeling and patriotism on the brotherhood of man.

First, and naturally, the beautiful in the picture attracted his attention as he saw here and there well dressed men and women, who sat for a moment in keen expectancy of hearing some remarkable flight of oratory, a hesitating wait for a few minutes and—then a perfumed handkerchief, or a jewelled vinaigrette is quickly thrust to the delicate nostrils of the refined little woman, as the

close, heavy air almost sickens her and hastens her exit. Before the closing doors have scarce ceased to swing after her, a bevy of young girls from some fashionable boarding school in the city is ushered in who come perhaps to supplement their own course by a lesson in political economy or parliamentary tactics. Their stay is short, for the reason, as one of the young ladies expresses it as they leave the Chamber: "Everything is so horribly poky and stuffy in there."

But look now—and two hours hence; and finally as the clustered lights overhead flood every part of the great room and these familiar types you will always see—first, the chronic seeker after office, or he who pursues an iridescent claim which like the proverbial "rainbow gold" is only a step farther on —these two sit, with the faith of a Micawber and the immobility of a stone, through session after session. Then there is the general loafer who comes for a warm place and a comfortable seat safe from the prod of the officer's billy and away from the monotonous and aggravating cry of "move on." Side by side he sits with his colored brother, who is totally indifferent to all that is going on and satisfied and contented to sit and drift into the land of "Nod" until the watchful eye of the doorkeeper notices his black woolly head sink too low, when he is awakened by a vigorous shake, and looking up dreamily into the eyes of the faithful guard he swiftly drifts back into dreamland.

Ridgway suddenly became conscious that a page was standing by his side and laying a package of letters on his desk. With his morning mail to occupy him he became oblivious of all around him

in noting the many requests in letters from his constituents that make up the greater part of every Congressman's mail. He rapidly went through everything until he came to the last, a small envelope addressed in a feminine hand to Mr. Stephen Ridgway in care of the House, and he turned it over several times in the way one does when there is a fear that some pleasant anticipation will not be fulfilled, yet from some unexplainable reason he felt that it was from Miss Du Mauriac.

He was nervously tearing it open when he felt something strike his shoulder and fall upon the desk before him. Looking up quickly he saw Miss Du Mauriac in the gallery above in the act of grasping the remainder of a bunch of carnations, that had become loosened from her coat as she threw it across the railing. At this moment several more fell striking him in the face. Rapidly gathering them up he hurried out through the lobby, up a flight of stairs and down the aisle of the gallery to find her still standing undecided and embarrassed as to whether to sit down or make a hasty retreat. Ridgway handed her the flowers and smilingly informed her that it was forbidden to throw things at the members, no matter how much one felt so inclined or how much they deserved it.

"You are unkind," she laughingly replied, as they sat down, "to invite me here, then to reprove me for the precipitate presentation of my flowers —and to return them so promptly."

"Oh, then, I may have them back?" he pleaded.

"In part, yes," she answered, as she gave him one.

"You are coming to dine with us on Thursday,

I trust," she asked, inquiringly, as she recognized the note he still held in his hand. "I am anxious to have you meet the cleverest young woman in Washington, who will be with us and who has expressed a desire to measure swords with you."

"I am not good at fencing," he declared, "yet even this terrible danger shall not deter me or prevent my accepting, when I realize that with it come certain pleasures. However, I hesitate to face the trying ordeal," he said, with assumed alarm.

"Oh, Katherine isn't so dangerous as I have pictured her," she replied with mock reassurance, "and besides, all of you down there"—and she pointed to the floor of the house—"are trained in the art of repartee, are you not?"

"Well," he answered, hesitatingly, "I understand that there are those who meet issues with these weapons, and I believe that it is considered a valuable asset in political debate, but I prefer to meet them with facts. Oh, I hate this word political," he continued resentfully, "and especially here where it attaches itself to every great question that should be considered with honesty of purpose and in dignified debate.

"For ten days I have sat there at my desk trying to accustom myself to the general order of things and hoping—hoping that this confusion, this apparent absence of form and hopeless lack of order with seemingly nothing definite in view necessarily accompanied the organization of the forces for work, but I am told that it goes on day after day and session after session like this—and the gravity of the bill before the House even now

but confirms this. How many in these packed galleries realize that upon the floor at this time amidst all of this hubbub and inattention there is under consideration before this great legislative body a measure which is to decide whether we shall, as a nation, enter upon a course of imperialism that has for its ultimate end the absorption of the entire western hemisphere, or keep within the Constitutional limits set by our forefathers—and how many members on the floor will lift their voices in protest? One—a half dozen perhaps in a half-hearted way, because they know that the member who is speaking is voicing the position the majority side will take, and to protest seems useless. Yet how different it must have been in the old days when every member demanded and asserted his right to a voice and a vote."

"But haven't you the same rights and privileges they had in the old days; and isn't it as much your duty as every other member to protest against this infringement?" inquired Miss Du Mauriac.

"In theory we have these rights, Miss Du Mauriac, and I acknowledge that it is as much my duty as theirs to insist upon them, but in fact my hands are tied, and I regret to say as effectually by my own side as that of the opposing party. It is useless for me to appeal to the Chair for recognition unless my party leader will send my name to the Speaker's desk, and I must go to him for this favor. Well, even this I would do under some circumstances, but let me tell you who this man is, and you can understand why I hesitate.

"You see him standing there near the lobby entrance surrounded by a small coterie of his politi-

cal henchman—you can understand why I hesitate, feeling as I do, that he, notwithstanding his masquerading under the guise of a democrat, is but a degree removed from Anarchy and the most dangerous man in public life to-day. That man is responsible for the tone of powerful newspapers in the several great cities of our country, papers that revel in the detail of crime and whose every column exhales evil suggestions. So powerful has he become in enlisting a misguided following of those who read his teachings and indorse him under the misapprehension that he stands a defender for what he terms are the rights of the laboring man that I bow my head in shame to say that my own party, even now, is considering him for the highest office in the land. This is the champion of the millions who go to their toil from day to day and who are fed on the contents of a penny sheet appealing to the basest in man through the words and acts of the agitators and criminals, gathered from the four corners of the world—or perhaps to come home after the day's work to find their children bending over the vile illustrations and suggestive pictures of every phase of crime, drinking in knowledge that may bear fruit in a similar act at any time.

"Through such a medium I must appeal for a right that no party should be allowed to control—which reminds me," he said, "that I am out of order as I have the floor without formal recognition."

"Then I recognize you and declare you in order," said Miss Du Mauriac.

"Upon which I appeal to the Chair for in-

formation as to the right she has to take back flowers that she has presented to a member."

"Upon the pre-eminent right—that a woman is privileged to change her mind," she answered, "and as proof of the justice of such a ruling, I give them back again, provided you go with me to the carriage," she added.

CHAPTER V.

RIDGWAY DINES AT THE DU MAURIACS.

"WHO are to be our guests this evening, daughter?" inquired Mr. Du Mauriac, entering the drawing-room a few minutes before eight o'clock one evening a few days later.

"Why, father, I told you at breakfast the other morning," she laughed, "but as they are old friends, except Mr Ridgway, it doesn't matter this time."

"Oh! the new member from Tennessee; a friend of Carter, isn't he? Though not of the same party, I believe. I heard something about him at the club to-day——"

"Miss Norris!" the butler announced, interrupting his speech, and that young woman swept in.

That she was thoroughly up to date was the first thing to impress one meeting her for the first time, and members of the legations, particularly Englishmen interested in the social evolution of the States, were accustomed to speak of her as typical. She was clever, original and self-assertive, and as she greeted her host, he smiled cordially. A man of the world could be assured of entertainment if he had the clever Miss Norris beside him at dinner.

"Whom are we to meet to-day, Julia?" she asked as she shook hands.

Julia smiled and replied in an undertone: "You are to meet the new member—the Hon. Stephen Ridgway!"—and Stephen entered the room.

Katherine Norris had a moment in which to observe him closely as he stood talking to Miss Du Mauriac before turning to her father. "Decidedly handsome," she concluded, "and he doesn't lose all his individuality, as I feared he might, appearing minus his sombrero."

Miss Du Mauriac brought Stephen across the room and presented him in due form to Miss Norris. For a moment Katherine's clever tongue failed her, and she was about to quench her originality in commonplace when Ridgway spoke:

"I am to have the pleasure of taking you out, Miss Du Mauriac tells me. Will you pardon my saying that a meeting with you has been anticipated by me with delight ever since I have been in Washington?"

"Why should I pardon when there is no offense? I am only afraid of disappointing you."

He smiled and quoted softly: "As one who in hopes of contradiction oft will say, Methinks I look most horribly to-day."

Katherine flushed but laughed, "Well, is the hope destined to disappointment?"

"That I will tell you later," he replied.

"You Southerners are the most quietly impertinent men in the world, aren't they, Mr. Du Mauriac?" said she, turning to that gentleman, while Ridgway made his way back to Julia's side.

At the table he found himself between Miss Norris and Dorothy George. The shaded candles reflected brightly on the gleaming silver and tall

wine glasses, shedding a softened radiance over the white cloth. The flowers were exquisitely arranged, everything harmonious in effect as it was artistic in design, appealed to Ridgway's innate appreciation of the refinements of wealth and culture, and to his instinctively beauty-loving nature.

It was a realization of all he had dreamed of and longed for in the old days, and once more the vividness of contrast between that time and this arose sharply before him.

The old farmhouse with its roughly plastered walls; the low and smoky ceilings from the great hickory logs that lay smoldering in the big open fireplaces through the long winter days; the long, unclothed oaken table from which they ate, sometimes with the white help about the place; and then the change to the more modern house in the village, the people with whom he lived, and the highly-colored china and plated ware that always made its appearance at Sunday dinners. He remembered the bright-flowered cotton curtains at the windows as he caught sight of the priceless tapestries hanging on the walls about him.

"Mr. Ridgway"—and Dorothy's voice breaking into his reminiscences, he checked his memories with a start. "Mr. Ridgway, why didn't you speak to me yesterday in the House? I nodded my head off every time you looked in my direction, but you never did see me."

"I looked once, but the sight was too distracting," he replied, laughingly. "A man needs all his wits about him when his head is as full of one idea as mine."

"And what is that?" inquired Katherine Nor-

ris, "to inaugurate some great reform in politics? Heaven knows they need it."

"My theories are revolutionary," acknowledged Ridgway, "and my ideas Quixotic."

"And what do you think you can accomplish?" she asked.

"Well," Stephen replied, "I can only answer as an old darky at home who was asked how he felt about the death of his third wife: 'Brer Johnson,' he said, 'I feels lack I'm in de hans uv er all-wise 'nd unscruperlus Providence.' 'I hold it true," he added earnestly, as the laugh which followed his story died away, "that life is worth nothing if nothing is accomplished, but I would give my life cheerfully in an effort to benefit my country, even if it failed."

"Ah!" said Miss Norris, somewhat sarcastically, "you are one who would lose his mediocrity in patriotism."

"You are too severe on Ridgway, Miss Norris," said Ned Carter; "his patriotism is no pose to conceal a lack of talent. Just wait till he gets a chance in the House and you'll hear things hum."

"Perhaps Miss Norris is like Doctor Johnson, who professed to think patriotism was the last refuge of a scoundrel?" questioned Ridgway.

"No, I give you credit for being an honest man, but you will need to be an exceedingly wise one not to be overthrown in your tilt with wind-mills. Given a Rozinante in the shape of a hobby-horse made from those views of yours, and what sort of a figure will you cut as Don Quixote?" and Miss Norris laughed as she spoke.

"I have a very tender regard for the good old

Don," said Miss Du Mauriac, who thought the conversation was growing too personal,"and his chivalrous quest has always aroused my warmest sympathy. It seems to me cruel to think of only the ridiculous in his character and miss the pathos."

"Goodness, Julia," exclaimed Dorothy, "where on earth do you find time to read all those old books? It is as much as I can do to skim a few pages of a magazine now and then."

"Oh, we all know your time, Dorothy, is spent in studying military and naval tactics; nothing is so absorbing," said Miss Norris, and Dorothy, with a blush, subsided.

Van Horn said, in a tone too low to be heard except by her: "I wish you would study only cavalry manoeuvers."

"They are too obvious to require it," retorted Dorothy.

"Wait and see," said Van Horn. "Strategy is what we are taught at West Point, and all is fair —in—war, you know."

"Mr. Ridgway," said Julia, speaking earnestly, "I want you to know how very much I sympathize with you in your views and how sincerely I wish you success in your efforts."

"Thank you, Miss Du Mauriac," he replied, "but I fear I shall accomplish but little; however, I mean to fight, and at least learn the meaning of life, ere 'tis past, in some vivid moments spent in the world's arena."

"And to whom will your 'dying they salute you' be addressed?" inquired Miss Norris, who had overheard his last words.

"To my ideal of womankind," he replied, rever-

ently, and for a moment his eyes met Julia's until hers fell before the admiration expressed therein.

"A toast to her," exclaimed Miss Norris, and lifting her wine glass high, she said:

"Here's to man's ideal woman, more elusive than moonshine, more unattainable than eternal youth, who, to remain ideal must always remain unreal."

"I drink to a realized ideal," said Ridgway softly to Miss Du Mauriac. "Will you drink to my successful quest of what Miss Norris terms unattainable?"

"I have wished you success in all you have so far undertaken," Julia replied evasively.

"Then drink with me to this," he said, with a compelling glance.

"To your success," she said simply as they all drank to the ideal woman.

"Thank you, that is all I need," he said, as Julia, gathering her fan and gloves, arose from the table.

"Father," Julia asked later when all their guests had gone to a reception at one of the embassies, "what was it you heard about Mr. Ridgway at the club?"

"Oh, some very remarkable things," responded Mr. Du Mauriac, "which I will tell you later," he added, tantalizingly.

Julia laughed, kissed her father good-night, and went to her room. There she sat down and allowed vague thoughts to take possession of her, and sometimes she smiled, and sometimes she sighed when she felt again the glances of penetrating gray eyes.

CHAPTER VI.

"AND DAMN ME, I'LL HELP YOU," HE SAID.

LATE in December, Congress having adjourned for the holidays, Ridgway was in the habit of spending his leisure hours in visiting the many public buildings and historic places within and contingent to the city, and on a cold, crisp afternoon, the day before Christmas, he had left the crowded, bustling streets in the business center and sought a bench in the square where he had first met Ned Carter, and near to the house of Miss Du Mauriac.

This had become his favorite out-of-door place of all the parks and circles in this great and beautiful city for the reason, perhaps, that it was the first glimpse he had caught of its architectural and topographical beauty as he had looked from his window in the old Arlington Hotel the morning after his first night in Washington, and because around the square were yet standing many of the old homes of political celebrities.

There facing the square stood the house that marks the zenith of every public man's ambition; standing there in its democratic simplicity with its very unostentatiousness conveying the strength and power of our citizen President—then the other

reason, one which he hardly dared acknowledge, even to himself, that it was near to the woman who, within the few short weeks of his stay in Washington, had, through her kindness and interest, made him forget his loneliness and was inciting him to the best efforts in his work.

As he sat there in his characteristic attitude, with his arms flung their full length along the back of the bench, his ungloved hand drumming idly, shifting his body now and then as the bare limbs overhead came between him and the sun, his thoughts wandered back to that first afternoon in November when he had spoken to Carter, here in the Park, with so much enthusiasm and assurance of the first bill he intended to introduce; and now, when he realized that almost a month had passed without his getting even the slightest recognition from the Chair in the most commonplace debates, he felt like casting aside the bill he had so carefully and thoughtfully prepared, to take his place with the new members in the fight for some secondary place on unimportant committees, or to trade and scheme with the leaders to get some of the time allotted to the minority on each bill; but try as he would to accept this compromise his inner self rebelled, and he determined that he would get the rights and privileges due him as a member, or else stand where he was, one in name only, and watch for some parliamentary slip to get his bill before the House.

Thus he mused upon what may have been imaginary wrongs, perhaps, but which to him had become intensely real. Then the day and incident came back to him that had first started the train

of thought in his mind from which the bill had been born.

Back in the early summer of ninety-eight, when the call came to the old Volunteer State for her quota of troops, he had stepped into the ranks of his local company and was soon rushed with this raw and undisciplined squad down to the great drill grounds of Chickamauga Park to be trained and fitted into his place in the great body of men that was being sent South.

Here he had lingered, day after day, and week after week, finally to be mustered out without one day of active service, but in that time happened the little incident upon which was framed a bill that he was now demanding consideration of in the United States Congress.

One morning as he was coming across the then almost deserted parade grounds in front of the Adjutant's office, he noticed a fellow soldier coming from the quarters in his direction, and soon, as is the habit of enlisted men, he had joined him, falling into step almost mechanically as they went on toward Headquarters.

Suddenly he had walked away from his companion, when, turning, he saw him standing beneath the flagstaff, under which they had just passed, his heels clicked together, his rigid body erect, while his right hand was at his visor in salute to the flag that fluttered a hundred feet above. In a moment the soldier had joined him and he remembered the hot flush of shame which mounted to his cheeks as the man, in answer to his query as to why he did that, explained in his broken English, that every soldier in the country

from which he came saluted his flag as faithfully as he saluted his Emperor.

Here was a man, the ink upon his oath of allegiance scarcely yet dry, teaching an American to show a reverence for the flag for which he was always ready to fight, yet passed it by as if it were a colorless rag; and again he remembered that out of the sixty thousand men who had camped upon this historic spot, not one had he seen show this deference for his national emblem.

And so he reviewed things of the past, his accidental nomination and election to Congress, and on until he thought suddenly of the to-morrow—that it was Christmas Day, and he wondered how he would spend it in his loneliness, when something within him bade him seek companionship, and unconsciously his eyes sought the home of the Du Mauriacs, but a few steps from where he sat.

As he arose, almost with the thought to cross to the house, he saw Dorothy George, laden as the veritable Santa Claus, as she was getting on a Georgetown car. Seeing him, she nodded pleasantly and called to him something he could not catch for the noise of the moving wheels, but he heard the one word "Julia," which he seemed to hear in the tinkling bells as he pulled the cord and stepped into the open vestibule of the Du Mauriacs.

The door was opened a moment later, and upon inquiring for Miss Du Mauriac he was told that she was not at home. Turning in his disappointment to make his way back into the square he was greeted by her father, who was just coming up the steps.

"Don't go, Mr. Ridgway," he said. "I saw you as you were going in, and hurried to catch you. My daughter is out, buying Christmas for some of her little charities, and will be at home later. Come in, if you don't mind waiting. I should like to talk with you."

Ridgway followed him up the broad stairway and into the library.

"Take this seat," said Mr. Du Mauriac, pushing a commodious and comfortable rocking-chair up to the open fire. "I know how you Southerners hate the cold and like to see the burning logs."

"May I offer you something?" he asked, and without waiting for a reply, as he called to the servant who had followed them into the room and was now taking away their coats and hats.

"Julia and I are like children when the holidays come, and are on the go until the last moment. Now tell me about your work," said he. "My daughter tells me that you are becoming a little disheartened over your inability to get your bill before the House. Nonsense, young man; why the session has hardly begun."

"I am impatient, I know," replied Ridgway, "and I am a little discouraged, for I have seen enough to satisfy me that I have no chance unless the leaders will see that I get the consent of the Chair, and I hardly think they will do this. You see, we are dependent upon their whims and fancies."

"True, true," answered Mr. Du Mauriac. "Now if you were on the opposite side," he said, hesitatingly, "I might be able to help you, as I have some influence with the Speaker and the majority leader."

"That is the thing to which I object and find so

hard to accept," argued Ridgway, "although I appreciate it none the less, but why is it necessary? And is it not a remarkable state of affairs that a member of the United States Congress has to ask outside influence or crawl through the filth and muck of political intrigue to get recognition in the great parliamentary body of which he is a member?"

"So it is, Ridgway," answered Mr. Du Mauriac, "but this being an accepted custom, is practically an unwritten law, and I am afraid if you antagonize the leaders which your party has designated, that you will accomplish nothing whatever. You would better accept the state of affairs and make the best of it."

"There is no choice in the matter," laughingly replied Ridgway. "I am forced to accept it. However, I have a plan, and shall at least get my ideas before the House without a great loss of self-respect, but as to the bill, for that I have no hopes; and anyway my views are not compatible, I believe, with democratic principles, so it is useless even to introduce it.

"I have learned many things since I came to Congress, Mr. Du Mauriac, but nothing which has struck me so forcibly as the misnomer of this word 'democracy,' and the absurdity of my position as a representative who is supposedly the voice of a proportionate part of the American people; and I find that instead of coming to a deliberative and legislative body, I have come to a great mart, a board of trade, a clearing house for the casting up of political and personal gains, and that, while in name I am a member from Tennessee, I am

in fact a small cog in a great machine—that I vote yea if my party vote yea, otherwise I vote myself into political ostracism and into the corner with the bewhiskered and sockless statesmen. Yet, sir, I was cradled in the State that gave us Andrew Jackson.

"I will take advantage of a parliamentary break to get my bill to its final reading, but I will see these scheming, slippery demagogues in hell before I will speak or vote as they dictate," said Ridgway, rising in the heat of his anger. "But I trust, sir, you will pardon me for such words in your presence," he said, as he slowly sank in his chair, realizing that his temper had carried him beyond good form.

"I appreciate," spoke Mr. Du Mauriac, "the anomaly of your position, and to a man of your temperament, who has inherited the old ideas of the true democracy, these modern methods are galling, and I also appreciate your deep feeling, but I have long since ceased to hope for a return to the old order of things.

"It has gotten almost beyond the control of the will of the people, but I like the fighting spirit in you, young man, and—and damn me, I'll help you," he said as he reached out his hand to Ridgway.

"Why, father—father," said Julia Du Mauriac, as she entered the room to overhear her father's last words. "Father"—and she came toward him—"what will Mr. Ridgway think?

"Daughter," he began, sternly, and then broke down—"daughter, when did you come in?"

"This moment, father," she replied, and Ridg-

way gave a great sigh of relief as he broke out laughing.

"Then I escaped," he said, half jesting and half in earnest, as he greeted her.

"I was a bit overheated, dear," apologized Mr. Du Mauriac, and they were soon talking commonplaces.

A few minutes later Mr. Du Mauriac excused himself. As he left the room a servant came in carrying numerous bundles and packages which Miss Du Mauriac had him place in the great armchair her father had just vacated.

"Now, sir," she said, turning to Ridgway, "I am going to give you some work as a penance for exciting father into using that horrible word—you are to help me make up my Christmas packages."

CHAPTER VII.

A SHORT CALL UPON THE SENIOR SENATOR.

"How does it happen, Carter," said the Senator upon whom Ned had taken Ridgway to call, "that the session is almost two months old and you haven't entered into any debates? I thought from the way you expressed yourself on certain policies when you were with me that the Congressional Record would be teeming with your speeches by this time."

"Well, it is this way, Senator," replied Carter; "when I was your secretary I was the man on the ground, but when I got into the House I felt as my friend Ridgway's 'fellah membah' from Arkansas expressed himself the other day in a speech—'I dun clumb a tree,' and to a man up a tree, Senator, it looks different, especially when he is talking for the benefit of his constituents."

"Carter does my friend from Arkansas an injustice, Senator," interrupted Ridgway, laughing, "and he surely had in mind one of his Down East friends, because it is a travesty on the gospel truth to say that a Southern member ever got any higher than the stump, while everybody knows, a Yankee member will climb a church steeple to see his way back into Congress."

"And there's another reason, Senator," said Carter, jokingly, "why I haven't had the temerity to open up my batteries on the floor when I know there is such a ready wit on the other side to turn my humorous darts against me."

"Well," responded the Senator, thoughtfully, "I am glad to have lived to see the day when youngsters like you two have so completely forgotten the Mason and Dixon line as to have such an affection for each other, and who can serve their country in such harmony and good fellowship, and"—turning to Ridgway, "young man, in the old days when I was a younger member in the House, my best friends were among the Southern members, and there have never been two men in the United States Senate for whom I had a greater respect and admiration than the two old war horses that represented your State; thank God, one of whom is still with us, but —Carter tells me that you have some rather unusual, and perhaps revolutionary ideas, and while I am quite sure it can't be as bad as this, I am going to take the privilege of a very old man, and one who has been in public service many years, to offer you two suggestions that may be of some help to you, and which have given many men with but mediocre ability, some success.

"Remember that conservatism is the tortoise in the race for public office, and that meteoric flashes in debate leave your political skies darkest when the day of judgment is at hand and you stand for re-election—they please, but leave no impress upon the stolid vote."

"But, Senator, will you permit me a question?" asked Ridgway.

The Senator having nodded his assent, Ridgway continued: "Taking it for granted that a man is willing to cloak his individuality and personal opinions with this robe of conservatism, is it the best service to his people—is it not a degradation of the best part of one's self to become a mere automaton to serve public opinion; and is it not our duty to dictate the laws to the people rather than theirs to dictate to us a law that is the outgrowth of a custom?

"I will confess that I am revolutionary, but not in the sense, sir, that you would take it. We are making laws to conform to customs, while I believe we should make customs conform to laws. I am thus far a revolutionist, Senator. May I illustrate?"

"I shall be glad to hear you, I am interested," acknowledged the Senator.

"It has become a custom with us, Senator, to look upon a public man from one of two standpoints—if he is a success and attains some celebrity he is to the public a gigantic fraud and a thief, or if he is conservative, as you would have us, he hasn't sense enough to steal. 'Ergo,' he is a fool and is usually retired. The denunciations and expressions to this effect we see written and hear spoken. This custom, Senator, has become an unwritten law based upon that which we call freedom of speech and of the press. Now, sir, I am a revolutionist here and hold that we should prohibit this because it is not good for the people and dangerous to any form of government."

"But, young man, you are attacking a sacred document," continued the Senator.

"If you will pardon me, Senator, I am simply attacking the people's interpretation of this great document, and you, I believe, have done no less in recent sessions in asserting a misinterpretation of certain other clauses of the American Constitution."

"Yes," answered the Senator quickly; "but I am pleading that it be not besmirched by the spirit and act of conquest in acquiring outside territory and dependencies."

"However, you grant me, Senator," retorted Ridgway, "that you hardly have the excuse of a false deduction, but an actual contradiction of its import and command, and which you think is a folly that will give us cause for a bitter repentance in future years."

("And so it will," muttered the Senator, *sotto voce.*)

"But, young man," he said, "this was done while the spirit of war was upon us, and I yet believe that a change of sentiment will come, that a campaign of education and a few years of experience will see us back in the straight and narrow path our forefathers set for us; and I shall continue the fight in the Senate in the future as I have in the past."

"Senator," spoke up Ridgway, "with all the respect I have for your ability and honorable service, and the strong men who are with you I question the result—and I may add, sir, as my reason, that with the license of debate in your honorable body the few pigmies and demagogues, there, can so impregnate and influence the country with speeches filled with the kaleidoscopic colors of the red, white and blue floating in imaginary grandeur above the palaces of

kings and the homes of the potentates, standing for the greatest power among all the nations, that they will have forgotten that the stars and stripes were carried from Bunker Hill to Valley Forge by the weary and footsore patriots that we might be a free people; and who never anticipated that the flag would be sullied by the conquest of another. Yet, you say that the constitution licenses our senators and representatives to send broadcast such teachings."

"My son, you speak with the enthusiasm of youth and the fire of imagination," said the Senator, paternally. "You need have no fear for the American people now, they are only in their infancy."

"Nor have I, Senator," respectfully replied Ridgway, "but it is for those who are to come after, that I fear, and for the suggestions and impressions we are making on their young minds. If they see us take these mistakes as a matter of course and treat them with so little concern, is it not possible that the lack of respect they may have for the government of their forefathers may leave them without the strongest safeguard of a democratic people—that from somewhere back in the line of the ancestors of those from other countries we are absorbing now, may spring to life a people who will want to dominate and rule in the old way?

"Are the hereditary influences of two centuries of a republic stronger than the influences of the thousands of years of the old monarchies? Is this a possibility that need not be considered? Don't you recognize in wealth and education the dividing lines of class from class; and do you realize that with this degree of distinction comes the desire for its

distinctive mark?—but, sir, I beg your pardon, I am talking to an older man."

"Oh, not at all," said the Senator, good naturedly. "I am rather impressed with some of your ideas. Have you spoken in the House?"

"Not yet, Senator," laughed Ridgway. "Do you think it advisable with the delusions under which I am laboring?"

"He hasn't quite answered your question, Senator," interrupted Carter, "for he has persuaded the minority leader to give him 'time' to-morrow on the Indian Bill."

"Then," said the Senator, rising, as the bells through the lobbies rang out a call for a quorum, "Carter, send a page for me to-morrow when Ridgway gets the floor; and both of you must come over and chat with me when you have any spare moments. I am always here in the committee-room when not on the floor."

"Senator, I will take it as a very great compliment if you will come and hear me," said Ridgway as they were taking their leave.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GENTLEMAN FROM TENNESSEE.

"MR. SPEAKER!"

"The Gentleman from Tennessee."

"No member of this honorable body, Mr. Speaker, is more in sympathy with this bill and its object than I, sir. But we are about to establish a precedent which, if it becomes general and is applied to classes and localities, will but accentuate and accelerate what to my mind is the most dangerous legislation that can befall a democratic country.

"The forced and injudicious education of a people whom God, in His infinite wisdom, has decreed, through the unquestionable and undebatable laws of evolution and the hereditary laws of man's development, are to be the producers for mankind and the physical balance to support the equilibrium of any government, be it despotic or democratic, is to me not only a folly which threatens the peace of a nation and its final destruction, but is an injustice and a misfortune to these people themselves.

"There is no more opportune bill from which to take one's text, Mr. Speaker, than the one now before the House. I refer to the bill governing the education and control of the 'American Indian,' and to that clause in the bill setting aside certain

money providing for the higher education of these people.

"This, within itself, Mr. Speaker, is hardly worthy of debate, for as every member of this body knows, 'tis but a sop thrown to the hungry office seekers and a salve we apply *pro re nata* for our conscience' sake. But, gentlemen and sir, it is the precedent to which I object. Let this government begin picking up wards here and there and educating them out of their natural and God-given places in the human family, and what does this over-education, this unnatural and injudicious training make of these people? Let me tell you, gentlemen. In a republic, with the misinterpreted and accepted idea of social equality and a mistaken license for liberty, it makes a discontented man, an unsuccessful man, and finally your socialist, your anarchist and revolutionist."

(Cries of "Mr. Speaker! Mr. Speaker!")

(The Chair recognizes a member.)

"Mr. Speaker!"

"The Gentleman from Texas."

"Mr. Speaker, if the Gentleman from Tennessee will permit me, I would like to challenge the statement he has just made."

"Mr. Speaker, I decline to be interrupted."

"Then, Mr. Speaker, if the Gentleman from Tennessee declines such a challenge, why does he make these statements, which I stand ready to refute?"

"Mr. Speaker, I will not defer to the Gentleman from Texas, or give up any of the time the Chair has allotted to me, to debate this question with him or any other Member, for two reasons. The one, Mr. Speaker, is that the Gentleman from Texas

desires to interject his remarks here simply for official record, and he has my permission to have entered into the Record any opinions he may have as a part of this debate, but I decline to give any part of my time to the harangue of this gentleman."

"Mr. Speaker!" interrupted the Gentleman from Texas, "the Gentleman from Tennessee has not only used insulting language to me, but has traduced the great American people in his previous remarks, and whom I stand here ready to defend, and——"

"Mr. Speaker," continued the Gentleman from Tennessee, "I decline any further interruption."

The Chair: "The Gentleman from Texas will come to order."

"And now, Mr. Speaker, the second and great reason why I shall decline any questions or interference is that I shall go out of the beaten track and general trend of debate in this body; and in justice to myself, my opinions and assertions, I desire to present what I have to say in continuity, and then, sir, these gentlemen are at liberty to challenge, to question or deny anything I may have said.

"I reiterate, sir, that I make no objection to this appropriation, whose object is to afford the Indian a higher education than his territorial school will give him, but it is the precedent I do not like.

"If this higher education makes a better citizen of the Indian, as the Gentleman from Pennsylvania argues, then, Mr. Speaker, why should not the government spend its millions in erecting universities in the South for the negro, and in the North and throughout the West for the millions of flotsam and jetsam that drift from foreign

shores into our ports from year to year? If this higher education is the keynote of our nation's safety and a republic's salvation, as the gentleman affirms, then, sir, conditions are indeed changed since the days of the sixties.

"Gentlemen, there is no man more maligned than the man with the hoe. When he fails to be the dominating force in this land of ours then will the stars and stripes have ceased to float over a free country. I stand here to say that you are over-educating and miseducating the children of to-day.

"There is no machine, Mr. Speaker, that requires such fine adjustment as that of the human anatomy. Ask any physiologist, and he will tell you that you can make muscles beyond a certain point only at the expense of mind; and he will also tell you that you can so develop the mind as to sacrifice bodily strength to the destruction of both.

"We must have toilers. The great majority of men and women were born to labor, and are happy and contented only in physical work and physical tire. Miseducate these people, give them an unnatural place in the human family, and then, Mr. Speaker, continue to pour the leaven of distrust, innuendoes and insinuations against those who sit in high places, into the unsettled life of a discontented people whose natural poise has been upset by this unnatural and illogical training, and this seething mass will disrupt any government under the blue vaults of heaven.

"Why make believe that we are a peculier people? Why ignore conditions around us, or the divine and human laws? Gentlemen, human nature is the same the world over, and these laws are just as ap-

plicable to us as to the Teuton or the Slav. Yet, gentlemen, you would ignore the antipathy of races, transgress the natural law, recognized even by the beast of the jungles, that the strong must rule.

"Fifty years ago, in the old Southland, were two distinctive races living side by side in harmony and peace because the negro recognized this simple truth; and so they would be to-day, Mr. Speaker, had you left him to follow his natural and hereditary inclinations. A toiler and a laborer by instinct and adoption until the misguided philanthropist of the North and thoughtless people of our own country undertook his education and uplifting. They believed, and honestly, gentlemen, that this was the solution of the problem, but, gentlemen, there was no problem until this miseducation began.

"Gentlemen, you often hear the question asked: 'Can the negro be educated?' I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the black man can take as high education as the white, that God never made anything in His image that could not be taught and trained, but, sir, and gentlemen, the highest education possible availeth the negro nothing if you place him side by side with the white man on any other basis than equality, and, as you know, this can never be.

"Then, gentlemen, why will you take this man from the fields and the plow to give him the degree of learning of his white brother who will not, and can never tolerate him as a social equal? Do you realize what you are doing? You are fitting him for a position he can never hope to occupy; you are taking him from his natural habitat to make what, gentlemen? To make the most dangerous

element in a democratic country—a man who is intellectually the equal of his fellows, yet a social outcast; not only cut off from his white brother, but ostracized from his own race. Is there a greater incentive to make this man a menace to the country and society?

"While you can educate any man of any race or nation up to the standard of his fellow, can you take the negro, Mr. Speaker, who is the progeny of forefathers who have lived in the subjugation and degradation of slavery for centuries and centuries, and establish that poise, that fineness of character and self-respect that comes only to a man after generations and generations of hereditary influence which has made the Caucasian what he is?

"Gentlemen, from whom does the suggestion of that awful crime, so common to this people, come? Mr. Speaker, why was this crime unknown in the days of the old South? Let me tell you who incites to this fiendish act. Does it come from the ignorant, brutal beasts who commit it? No, gentlemen, but from the disgruntled, dissatisfied, unhappy negro you have mounted on the pinnacles of learning and shown the land which to him must ever be the unattainable. It is the acme of hatred of class for class and race for race that makes this man debase his ignorant brother.

"Gentlemen, was there ever such a miscarriage of philanthropic charity? Was there ever such an example of miseducation?

"Then, gentlemen, leave this problem where it belongs—with the Southern people; and to its only logical solution—his employment as a laborer in

the fields and factories in the land which is his home through unfortunate sequences.

"But if you will give him the education he will take and make him into the skilled workman, to fit him to compete in the trades of his white brother, then, sir, for every university you erect, and every training school you build—if you would prepare to meet its result—enlist a regiment of soldiers and build a factory for his accoutrements of war, for within the ken of you and me they will be wanted in your great centers of labor, in your esthetic East and commercial West to shoot down your white brother who lives by the sweat of his brow and who will claim the right to labor, free from such competition.

"This will solve the problem, gentlemen, I grant you, and many years before we of the South will find a solution, but it will solve by extermination, which no Southern man wants to see.

"But, Mr. Speaker, I asked the indulgence of this body to discuss the status and remedies for that which seems to me to be the most vital question and imminent danger which confronts the American people; and while it is not directly due to legislation, gentlemen, it is the indirect result of such misdirected efforts as you now propose in this bill, and the result of evils that you have permitted to become characteristically an American custom.

"The irreverence, the disrespect, the public and private expressions of disgust for public officials and the insignia of office, which stands for a government, may be a liberty, Mr. Speaker, but when the history of the world is written a century hence,

sir, if this nation stands in the category of republics it will stand an anomaly among the nations of the world. Educate, if you will, and as you will—build school houses upon every square mile of this broad land of ours, and when you have finished these place by their side a house of God, and these two educators, the greatest factors of civilization known to man, will not counteract the half of the evil influence of licensed speech and suggestive utterances which are scattered broadcast; even, gentlemen, from the very halls of Congress and the Houses of State Assemblies to percolate and permeate this democratic land of ours, to contaminate and infiltrate the youthful minds that you are teaching and training for American citizenship; and whose heritage is to be a land of freedom.

"I say, Mr. Speaker, that you educate without logic, without reason and with a terrible result when you fail to teach and impress upon the coming generations a respect and a reverence for those in authority, who represent the power of the law and the dignity of office; and yet, Mr. Speaker, within the last few years and during the present session of this Congress there have been speeches made from the floor of these chambers that, had such words been spoken where one would only expect to hear such demagogic, anarchistic sentiment and dangerous suggestions acclaimed, these speakers would have fallen within the pale of the law, and have been decried throughout the land as dangerous characters.

"What license, Mr. Speaker, has any man under the guise of political debate to attack those in authority in such language as would subject him to

a punishment for contempt before any judge in our judiciary?

"Is it not dangerous, Mr. Speaker, to permit this license of debate to continue? Ah, sir, if only those who have gone before could answer! And I call upon the spirits of the martyred three—Mr. Lincoln! Mr. Garfield! Mr. McKinley! what man spoke the words that fired the unbalanced brain in him who struck you down? To you three who behold the scroll of eternity unrolled, and see the future of nations before you—tell us, is there a deeper pitfall in our pathway than this mistaken license for freedom of speech and of the press?

"Mr. Speaker, the dumb wounds of dead Cæsar never spoke to the Roman people with half the eloquence of these cold marble images of our 'Martyred Presidents' out there in Statuary Hall; and some day, Mr. Speaker, the American people will awaken to interpret the message from their silent lips, and will demand the reverence and respect due their 'Chief Magistrate' and those in authority.

"Then as we educate the youth of the land, Mr. Speaker, let us also impress upon them the respect due those who represent the government; and if that day should come when from the evil which we have done should arise civil strife, the young men of the land would arise as a unit at the clarion call of the fife and the drum's wild alarum, to stand for the flag which means a freedom and not a license.

"But, gentlemen, perhaps you ask for proof of the evil of licensed speech, and if so, gentlemen, why need we go further than into the public galleries of this chamber? Look first, gentlemen, at

the 'old habitue,' who comes here day after day and session after session. See him there with the contemptuous sneer hanging about his lips as he sits lolling and slouching in his seat. Is his presence an honor, a compliment to this body? Do you see any respect for the office we represent or the great emblem hanging there signifying the usage of this chamber? For what is he waiting? Watch him, gentlemen, until you see him awaken into an electrified and almost maniacaled being; his boredom has gone, his disinterestedness has passed away, and now his leaden and blood-shot eyes are agleam with the fires of passion and of hate; his shuffling feet and tense, clasped hands signal the noisy outburst of his approval, which soon will come. What has happened, gentlemen? Is a Webster or a Clay or a Calhoun about to arise in this debate? No, Mr. Speaker, but the demagogue's time has come; soon this chamber will ring with the strident voice of his favorite member. Some institution is to be attacked, some one who represents our government is to be maligned, some topic dear to his anarchistic heart is to be discussed. Ay, gentlemen, perhaps—perhaps, I say,—even your President is to be blackguarded. And, Mr. Speaker, this is freedom of speech." (Cries of "Shame! shame! shame!") "Shame! shame! yes, gentlemen, well you may say shame, and pile upon this every opprobrium you have. But wait a moment. There is another picture.

"See—coming down yonder aisle is an old man, tanned by the western winds of half a century, and carrying the wounds inflicted perhaps by the hostile fathers of the wards of this bill as he blazed a

trail across the western mountains. Coming from the furthermost boundaries of our territory to enter these halls for the first time. Look upon the awe-stricken face of the little lad following in his wake, his little grandson, whom he has taken on his knee a hundred times, perhaps, to tell the story of the father of his country. Observe their quiet and careful entry into the presence of this body. Do you know what is in the mind of that boy? The memory of what his grandfather has taught him, to honor and respect everything that stands for his country. But wait a little while and then look up into their faces. My God! gentlemen, what do you see when some member has held up to ridicule that place which every American boy is told he may some day fill. Ay, gentlemen, you may well cry 'shame' when you think of the message you are sending back home with this lad, when you think of the evil you have planted in this young mind.

"Yet, Mr. Speaker, there are people, I understand, who will petition the government to transport children to its seat to give them object-lessons, but, Mr. Speaker, until we can stamp out this license of speech I say we would better build a wall around every legislative body in the land.

"There is another question upon which I would like to touch, Mr. Speaker, a question foreign, perhaps, to this debate, yet, one very dear to the hearts of your demagogue members; and which furnishes the theme for his many harangues."

"Gentlemen, we stand to-day, greater chasms of social and moneyed inequality dividing us than any people on the earth; and which no laws of democracy can ever bridge. Why? Gentlemen—

because we have taken wealth as the only measure of democratic rank and respectability, and in so doing we have fastened upon ourselves the vulgar aristocracy of money and laid the foundation upon which we are building that hate of class for class that has destroyed every republic in the history of the world.

"Mr. Speaker, the two greatest incompatibles ever thrown into the crucible of human nature are democracy and wealth. Yet, sir, we expect to go on to infinite time in fancied security behind the fortress of a document our forefathers gave us, after we have dug away the key-stone of its strength.

"It is as feasible to take an infant in its vigor and promise of adult life, and as it grows into adolescence strike from time to time a member from its body; and find at its maturity a perfect man. Shall we continue to hide our heads beneath the shifting sands of such false reasoning to lift our eyes at last to see class arraigned against class? Can we longer afford to answer the problems which confront a growing and changeable people by that stereotyped and worn-out cry, 'it's unconstitutional'?

"Why, sir, and gentlemen, human nature calls for degrees and distinctions in social life as does the ability and acumen in commercial life for degrees of accumulated wealth; and there is no more inviolate law in the philosophy of nature than this.

"Mr. Speaker, a people who have reached the point of refinement and accomplishments of ours demand some patent of distinction and the isola-

tion of individuality. Is it not better, then, that the government fix this reward, stamp its approval upon an insignia of office that money cannot buy, than for us to hand down to posterity the grasping, tremulous, bejewelled hand that stands for the hallmark of greatness in the colossal fortunes of the venders of mouse traps, the peddlers of oil and the degenerate heirs to great possessions?

"Give these baubles to be striven for, let the government show its disapproval of the social power of wealth, and the incentive for vast accumulations of money is gone, the great fortunes will disintegrate, the source of irritation between the classes will disappear and the nation will be the stronger and the more truly democratic. I, for one, Mr. Speaker, would rather see title and rank bestowed upon men and women accomplished in the arts, in letters and in the sciences; and upon those who risk their lives in the defense of their country, or those who have given us the great mechanical devices that have pushed civilization a thousand years ahead than to see the coarse, moneyed and political aristocracy that is almost upon us.

"You say this is not democracy. Of course not, gentlemen, but it is one solution. Have you any other to offer? There is no danger, you say—that these people who hedge themselves about with the functionaries of a royal personage are the butt and ridicule of every true American, and I grant you, gentlemen, that they, within themselves, are 'as but the thistle-down,' but they are the ripple which locate the shoals beneath, they are the faint lines of demarcation dividing class from class. This

is the serpent that is trailing through your fields of democratic Arcadia, the manna your demagogue member throws to his hearers, and the red rag of anarchy your agitator is shaking in the face of his followers.

"But, Mr. Speaker, continue your systems of educating, raise these people from their natural places, unfit them for the work they are born to do, destroy your equilibrium between mind and muscle, and fail to keep your ratio of wealth that their separate conditions call for; and when your moneyed aristocrat is no longer to be tolerated you will find your leaders here for the forces your cowardly agitators are preparing with his licensed speech and by the aid of a careless press."

(Cries of "No! No!" and "Mr. Speaker!")

"Mr. Speaker, I recognize that we owe the press a great debt, that they have given us the place we occupy to-day among nations, and I would not take one legitimate right from them, but, sir, in their great rivalry, in their eagerness to serve their patrons, to pander to the taste of an indiscriminating public they have been misled into the belief, perhaps, that we want the minute histories of crime, the caustic criticisms of public officers, the speeches of the agitators and the suggestions of the demagogue; and they overlook the fact that they are educating us to expect and look for this feature of the modern newspaper.

"We all recognize their power for good or evil, their power to rule, as the Gentleman from Indiana has stated; but who has forgotten that only a few years ago this power—in thoughtlessness and in compliment to a beautiful figure of speech that fell

from the lips of a man—gave him such an impetus toward the Presidential chair as to call for their combined efforts to check and——"

"Mr. Speaker," interrupted a member from Kansas as he rose ponderously from his seat, and taking the twisted ends of his long, gray beard from between his teeth, he drawled: "Mr. Speaker, I would like to know if the Gentleman from Tennessee is a Dimicrat or—er—er what?"

"Mr. Speaker," answered that gentlemen, when the laughter from the majority side had subsided—"Mr. Speaker, I was a Democrat, but——" and he looked down on the angry, scowling faces around him—"but now I guess I am 'er what,' and I bespeak the Gentleman from Kansas a vacant chair in his corner."

"Mr. Speaker," he continued, seriously, "perhaps I have spoken in a manner here to-day unbecoming to a younger member, and I realize that there are older men here, and young ones as impetuous and visionary, even as I, who could have presented these thoughts in more forcible and conservative speech, but, sir, these questions can no longer be ignored, and what I have said to-day has long lain dormant in my mind. In my heart there has been no malice toward any member here, and if they feel that I have mistaken the solutions for these problems I can only say as he who said—

"'Master, show me the way.'"

CHAPTER IX.

THE BACHELOR HOME OF THE HON. EDWARD PARKINS CARTER, M'PHERSON SQUARE. WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY.

CONGRESSMAN CARTER, laying down a paper from which he has been reading, and taking up another, exclaimed: "Umph! The Devil—worse and worse the farther you go—'Unamerican,' 'Anglophobiac,' —sayeth one, 'Treason,' howls the yellow oracles!"

"Of course, you have seen the papers, Morris."

"Yes, sir, and it couldn't have been better for them. Another chance to go on record before the dear people; and the best thing of the session for the newspapers, sir—but a very bad thing for Mr. Ridgway. Have you seen the *Post* editorial? I clipped it for you."

"Thanks, the *Post* is always conservative. Let's see what they have to say."

"The full text of Congressman Ridgway's speech in the House yesterday, in support of an amendment to the bill governing the education of the Indian wards of the Nation will appear elsewhere, etc., etc.

"Mr. Ridgway takes a very unusual position for a Congressman and politician of the present day, from which we infer that he is either a Congress-

man—holding his honor and opinion above the current price of those who demand demagogism or any ism to beat the party in power—or else he is an unbalanced politician seeking political suicide.

"In either case, after his speech of yesterday, we predict his early retirement from the halls of Congress.

"Below we quote the salient points of his speech, upon which we take the liberty to comment, and say as Polonius would say, 'Though this be madness—in a Congressman—yet there is method in it.'"

"File that away with the others, Morris. Mr. Ridgway will be here this afternoon, and it might interest him to see how unpoular his ideas of reform are."

"He is very sensitive to newspaper criticisms, is he not, sir?"

"Yes, and all the more reason to admire his courage in this."

"Isn't Senator Billinsgate one of the conferrees on the committee that is to meet here this afternoon, Mr. Carter?"

"Yes—but why do you ask?"

"I thought perhaps you had heard that he and Mr. Ridgway had some unpleasantness in the cloak room yesterday, after Mr. Ridgway's speech; and it might be embarrassing for him to meet the Senator here."

"What is this,—Stephen Ridgway isn't given to brawling—however, I know how he dislikes the course Billinsgate has taken in the Senate in making those vituperative and demagogic speeches, though they are in the same party."

"It is said, sir, that Senator Billinsgate threatened openly to have the party bosses demand Mr. Ridgway's resignation for his speech on the Indian bill; and that Mr. Ridgway said that he was going to denounce him in the House for his vicious attacks on the President and the Army. They might come to blows if they were to meet in private here, and it would be disagreeable notoriety for you."

"Oh, damn the notoriety, Morris, and besides—Ridgway is too much the gentleman to start a brawl under any man's roof."

"But he might be forced to resent an insult, sir."

"Well, under the circumstances, it would be pardonable. However, I don't think we need have any fears, and Steve is always welcome at any time. Billinsgate will not be here until late, and when the committee come have them shown into the library. When Ridgway comes have him brought here. What time is it?"

"A quarter to six."

"The committee is not due until six-thirty, I believe. Are those references listed that I want for the debate on the Rivers and Harbors bill next week?"

"Yes, sir."

"The mail cleared up?"

"Yes, sir—everything important."

"Anything this afternoon?"

"Nothing important, except this wire from the Leather Workers' Union, asking that you vote for the eight-hour bill when it comes up to-morrow."

"Very well; answer it—say—Wire received."

"Nothing else, sir?"

"Nothing."

"Isn't it rather dangerous to ignore these people?"

"Politically—yes—but I don't propose to be importuned or forced by any body of men. I am here to vote and work as my conscience and intellect dictate, and not as any particular interest may suggest.

"That will do for to-day. Leave word with the door to have Mr. Ridgway wait if I am out."

(Returning to the table and picking up paper.)

"Poor Steve—how the papers do lambast you. Well, it's an ill wind that blows nobody good, they say, and the yellows and the demagogue members will find plenty of text in yesterday's Record to furnish the people with sermons on American liberties and social equality for months to come."

"Why, Morris, haven't you gone?"

"No, sir, I met your cousin and Miss Norris at the door as I was going out, and they asked to see you."

"Oh, the devil! Where will Katherine Norris and that thoughtless cousin of mine be going next, I wonder. But these are bachelor quarters, Morris, and——"

"It's Washington, sir."

"Of course—I forgot. Have them come up."

"You mean come in, Cousin Ned. We are up all right," announced Dorothy from the door.

"Then come in by all means."

"And I—Mr. Carter?"

"Always welcome, Miss Norris."

"But sometimes 'de trop,' I fear, as I see you are busy."

"Not at all. Morris and I have just finished for

the day, and I was simply scanning the papers. They are very interesting these days to a new member, you know."

"Ned, may Mr. Morris show me your collection of curios," pleaded Dorothy. "He tells me they are worth seeing."

"Certainly—but be careful, Morris, not to let Dorothy tumble out of the window. This is the twenty-second, you know, and all the parades pass through the square."

"What do you find so interesting in the papers to-day, Mr. Carter, that you must needs read them all?" asked Katherine Norris, inquiringly. "So far as I could see there was nothing in any of them but vile and sarcastic comments on Mr. Ridgway's speech."

"You heard it—you were in the galleries yesterday with Julia Du Mauriac, were you not?"

"Yes."

"What did she think of Ridgway's effort?"

"Oh, she indorsed everything he said, of course."

"And you?"

"In part—yes."

"You believe that we should have class distinctions?"

"We have them, haven't we? Where do you find the lines more closely drawn than in Washington?"

"Oh, of course, it's here—everywhere in fact where there are degress of learning and wealth—but, shall we legalize it—give it an insignia—make it something to be striven for in an honorable way?"

"In other words, as Ridgway says, shall we ennoble through the arts, the sciences, letters—civil

and military sacrifices for the government, or—shall we let these questions drift along the course they are taking, until we have a moneyed and political aristocracy that in time must become so arrogant and irritating to their intellectual and generous superiors that these stronger characters will lead the physical strength of the nation to destroy these innocuous parasites; and in so doing destroy our country's peace. These are Stephen Ridgway's theories in part—which, as you know, threw the House into a turmoil that the oldest members have never remembered seeing."

"In theory," replied Katherine Norris, "I believe as he—but it is impractical, impossible. One reason lies there beneath your hand—the public press; and on Capitol Hill is another—there where the demagogues sit, howling at every opportunity for free speech and social equality that their strident voices may penetrate the innermost recesses of their districts, that their constituents may know they are ever fighting for American rights and liberties—and incidentally for re-election to office."

"Great reforms that change the status and fundamental ideas of a nation never come by ballot—but by force of arms, if history is correctly written."

"As regards his plea for a restricted and modified education for the millions who are physically and mentally capacitated, only, for the hewers of wood and the drawers of water—I can only say that no ambitious public man can be in his right senses and so express himself; even if it is for the happiness of these people and the safety of the government."

"Oh, the fool! The fool!" she exclaimed.

"But if he honestly believes these things, why shouldn't he so express himself?"

"Why? Why, because Stephen Ridgway might have reached the highest goal had he not deliberately thrown his chances to the bad—had he even been content to rest upon what he had gained up until yesterday."

"You, who know better than any one else, ask why?"

"Oh, if he had only kept off that educational bill and have been more of a diplomat and less the poor, honest fool that he is! What has he gained by this Quixotic stand that he has taken—the ridicule of the press, and final retirement from Congress."

"Worse than that—an immediate retirement," said Carter, "for I understand that the powers that be in his State will request his resignation at once."

"Surely he will not accede to any such demand."

"He is independent, as we have every reason to know, and whether he will fight to the end of his term—for it certainly means a fight if he keeps his seat—or his sensitiveness to criticism will cause him to resign, I know not."

"I beg your pardon, Ned," said Stephen Ridgway, entering unannounced, "but I understood that you were with the committee, so I came up to wait, as it is very important that I see you."

"Miss Norris, am I intruding?"

"Oh, not at all."

"No, indeed, Steve, Miss Norris and Dorothy have honored me, I believe, for no other reason than to look through my collection of resurrected treasures."

"If you will call Dorothy, Mr. Carter, we will leave you and Mr. Ridgway to more important affairs."

"Certainly—excuse me a moment, Steve."

CHAPTER X.

SENATOR BILLINSGATE OF THE CONFERREES.

"Of course, you are surfeited with congratulations, Mr. Ridgway," began Miss Norris, "but I want to tell you what a splendid effort I thought your speech of yesterday; and what a strong defense of your position, although——"

"You don't agree with me," interrupted Stephen Ridgway, "but I thank you none the less for your compliment."

"But you will fight it out, you will not resign your seat."

"I am compelled to resign, am I not, since the press and the party demand it?"

"No power on earth could force me to, were I in your place. You have done the party no wrong. What if the position you have taken is unusual and out of tune, and they all bray for their own selfish ends, you can't afford to retreat; which will certainly leave that impression if you resign now."

"But I can be of no further use to my constituents, or service to my district; and the Chair would hardly recognize me, after yesterday, in debate."

"Why not? Is it possible that they can intimidate the Speaker of the House to that extent!"

"Intimidate is not a good word, Miss Norris. It is better called influence, as it is not so harsh a term and savors more of diplomacy."

"You go back to Tennessee, then?"

"Have I said so?"

"But you refuse to fight."

"Is it worth while when public opinion is so against you, and no possibility to win in the end?"

"Then why take the stand you did, if such reform was so impossible to begin with? Why close your career so ingloriously?"

"It began without glory. I came into the office without glory and by accident."

"So have some of our highest officials, yet they have taken the tide at the flood. Then you will resign?"

"Upon one condition—no."

"Is it possible that you would sacrifice your constituents for a condition?"

"Yes. When it is one woman's pleasure, and if it brings that woman into my life in the end. If I succeed."

"You admit a possibility of failure, then?"

"If I fail, I shall ask nothing."

"Waiting, Katherine," said Dorothy George, entering. "Oh, Mr. Ridgway, your speech of yesterday was just great, but——"

"Not naïve, Miss Dorothy, I fear."

"Oh, just fiery, peppery, you know; and it raised such a row, didn't it, Ned? I just dote on a row in the House. But were you not afraid that cowboy man from Texas would jump into you?"

"There wasn't any danger to Steve, Dorothy," said Ned, laughingly, "for they were too busy look-

ing for an opening to jump into the official record to think of anything else."

"Well, it was good fun, anyway, and I hope you will stir them up again, soon, Mr. Ridgway. Come, Katherine, I'm ready. Good afternoon, everybody."

"Good-bye, Mr. Carter—Mr. Ridgway, I wish you success," added Miss Norris.

"Ned, don't let me keep you from the committee."

"Oh, not at all, Steve, but you said it was important that——"

"I see you—yes, but I can wait."

"No, let the committee wait and" (ringing bell) —to servant, "Say to Mr. Morris that I am detained for the present."

"Well, Steve, they gave it to you pretty hard in the morning papers, but give them time to digest it, old fellow, and I think they will be more rational in their criticisms. What is this I hear about the State bosses demanding your resignation? I hope they are not going to make it unpleasant for you."

"It is true, Ned, that they have wired me to that effect, but what I have to say to you is more important to me, at present. You have heard of Billingsgate's attack on me in the lobby yesterday, of course."

"Yes."

"Well, this man, as you know, is not only a disgrace to the party and people whom he represents —but to the whole country, and the United States Senate.

"I fear no personal violence from him, but I am satisfied that he will carry out his threat to criti-

cise and blackguard me in the Senate, under a personal privilege, simply for the purpose of flooding the country with his demagogic utterances and vicious tirades.

"As you know, it will be impossible for me to get recognition from the Chair except through the influence of your side, and as a personal favor I want you to see that I get the floor to-morrow if possible. You can assure the Speaker that I will in no way refer to my speech of yesterday—but there is one service I want to do my country before I retire or am retired.

"Billinsgate has attacked the President, the Army, and damned everything and everybody connected with the Government. It is my object to offer an apology in behalf of the party to which we both belong for this man's attack and the insults to these representatives of the Government. Will you do this for me?"

"Yes, if it is in my power—but do you not realize that this may lead to a personal attack on you by the Senator?"

"Oh, he is harmless enough when it comes to that."

"He is coming here this afternoon as one of the conferrees of the committee."

"Then I will not embarrass you by staying."

(Servant entering, followed by Lieutenant Van Horn.)

"Come in, Van Horn; glad to see you."

"You know Van Horn, Steve?"

"Very well. How are you, sir?"

"Don't let me disturb you, gentlemen—but

(looking about the room inquiringly) I thought Miss George was here, and——"

"You are a little late, old man. Dorothy left with Miss Norris twenty minutes ago. She sometimes forgets her appointments, as I suspect you have reason to know."

"Oh, it was not prearranged, I assure you. I will be going, however, as I may catch her at the Norrises."

"Stay and have something, won't you? Steve, you and Van Horn can have a smoke, and I will join you before you have finished your cigars. Only a short committee meeting, Van Horn; and I will be with you in a few minutes."

"No, no; some other time," said Van Horn.

"But you will both join me before you go (filling three glasses). This is the twenty-second, you know, and we can't forget Father George; so here's to the Father of our Country!"

"And to the Statesman," added Steve.

"To General Washington and the Army!" exclaimed Van Horn.

"Senator Billinsgate to see you," announced the servant.

"Ah, Carter—celebrating, I presume," sneeringly remarked Billinsgate, as he followed the servant into the room.

"No, Senator, just a little toast to Father George."

"Will you join us?"

"No!" retorted Billinsgate.

"This is Mr. Van Horn, of the Army; and you know my friend, Ridgway, of course."

"Humph! So you are one of the President's

bodyguards, I believe," to Van Horn and ignoring Ridgway.

"Pardon me, Senator, but I think I said Mr. Van Horn was of the Army," interposed Carter.

"The Senator may have forgotten that the President is always the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, and hence our superior officer to command? I have the honor to be on that detail at present, sir," remarked Van Horn.

"The Senator recognizes no superior in free America; and I believe the President has also refused to recognize the Senator's appointees, which, I presume, accounts for the Senator's recent remark," added Ridgway sarcastically.

"I recognize no damn East Tennessee Republican, sir, who poses as a Democrat; and to whom I have proffered no remarks. Mr. Carter, I came here to attend a committee meeting, and not to meet this gentleman or to be insulted by any impertinent young satrap," asserted Billinsgate.

"Sir, you cannot meet any other gentlemen in my house," declared Carter. "We are waiting for you to leave—or shall I ring?"

"Just a moment, if you please, Ned," interrupted Ridgway. "The Senator came here to attend a committee meeting, as he has just remarked, but with your permission the Senator will remain until he has offered you an apology, and an apology to Mr. Van Horn; as well as a written apology to the President of the United States, or—I—will—kill—him—for—his—insult—to—me!"

"Van Horn, will you kindly close the door, and see that no one comes in. I will see that the Senator does not go until—well, until he has proven the bet-

ter man of the two, or we have shown him to be the blackguard we have taken him for."

"You can't intimidate me or prevent my leaving this room," blustered Senator Billinsgate.

"Surely the Senator who has been so courageous as to insult three men in as many minutes is not contemplating flight, or fears intimidation from an East Tennessee Republican?"

"That's all very well, sir," sneeringly replied Billinsgate, "but I will not fight, nor can you force me into a duel."

"Of course not, nor shall I offer you the satisfaction any gentleman has the right to demand," continued Stephen Ridgway.

"There will be no duel, Senator, but you will do as I direct, or—(picking up a knife from the table) —by God, sir, I will kill you."

"You wouldn't murder me?" pleaded Billinsgate.

"No more than I would murder a rattlesnake about to strike an unconscious victim. But—I—will—as—surely—kill—you!" asserted Ridgway.

"Gentlemen, for God's sake, don't let him murder me!" cried Billinsgate, now white and trembling with fear.

"Steve! Don't you realize what you are doing? Van Horn, in God's name, this must not be," pleaded Carter.

"You shall not interfere; the damn blackguard deserves it," said Van Horn, catching hold of Carter.

"Now, sir, write as I dictate," commanded Ridgway, pushing Billinsgate into a chair beside the table.

In Defense of His Excellency.

"Write, damn you!
"Write:

"To The Associated Press Office, Washington.

"Gentlemen—During the present session of Congress, while in anger and the heat of debate, and at times thoughtlessly, perhaps, I have expressed myself in harsh terms, reflecting on the Army and its acts in the Philippines, and have criticised the President unjustly.

("You did not misunderstand, Senator, those are the words—'Criticised the President unjustly,') reiterated Stephen Ridgway, as Senator Billinsgate stopped hesitatingly—"and after due deliberation and reflection I have come to the conclusion that it is not only disloyal——

("Yes, 'disloyal') repeated Ridgway—"and harmful, but a bad example to the youths of the land. That it is the duty of every citizen in public and private life to show a proper respect for the head of the nation and the forces which support him.

"I therefore offer my sincere apologies to the President and the Army, and request you to furnish the press throughout the country with a copy of this statement.

"(Signed) BILLINSGATE, Senator."

"Now, sir, I will take that paper."

"You will ruin me, as well as the party if you give that paper to the press," pleaded Billinsgate.

"Oh, no, Senator, I will have made you a gentleman in the eyes of the world; and therefore the party will be the more respectable. Van Horn,

the Senator asks you, as a personal favor, to take his statement to the Associated Press office at once, and humbly begs your pardon for the remark he made a few minutes ago.

"Did I interpret you correctly, Senator?"

"The devil! I'll stand this no longer," swore Billinsgate.

"Oh, yes you will, Senator.

"You accept the Senator's apology, of course, Van Horn, as he is too full for utterance.

"Kindly have the Associated Press wire this at once. The Senator will remain here a short time in order that he may not succumb to the temptation to recall his statement.

"Ned, Senator Billinsgate regrets having abused your hospitality, I am sure, and if you will present his excuses to the committee I think that he will make the 'amende honorable' later. In the meantime I will regale the Senator with a few good East Tennessee yarns, which I am sure he has never heard, and which I trust will amuse him until you join us."

CHAPTER XI.

THE ROOMS OF STEPHEN RIDGWAY, CAPITOL HILL, THE NEXT MORNING.

STEPHEN RIDGWAY was engaged at his desk in arranging papers, and his negro servant, Uncle Wash, was busy in packing books, etc., when he was interrupted by the old darky.

"Den we's gwine back to Tennessee, Mars Steve?" inquired Uncle Wash, stopping a moment from his work. "I sho' does hate ter leab Wash'n-ton, for it's er monstrus intrusting place, and dar's sum pow'ful fine cullud folks here, sah."

"Uncle Wash, how often have I told you not to call me 'Mars Steve'?" admonished Stephen Ridgway. "You know as well as I that my people never owned you or any other slaves."

"Dat's de Gawd's truf, sah, sho' as I lib, it am. Yoah folks never did own no niggers, fur I's dun worked in Mars Stringfellow's field many er day and seed yer pap er hoe'n corn in yer gran'pap's place, 'jinin' old Mars Tom's. But, Mars Steve—begen yer pard'n, sah—I jest natur'ly cain't help callin' quality folks Marster en Missis coz I'm too ole er dog to le'rn new tricks; 'nd somehow wid folks yer love, it seems more 'genial 'nd 'spectful like to a fo'-de-war nigger.

"We cullud folks am mighty 'pressionable wid quality, sah, 'nd er man is quality when he cums ter Congress; leastwise in de eyes of de cullud 'stituents.

"Dey ain't nobody up here goner know Congressman Ridgway dun come off er po' East Tennessee farm, is dey?"

"Well, well, Uncle Wash, you certainly haven't read the papers for the last few days, have you?"

"Fur de Lawd's sake, Mars Steve, you ain't been tellin' des news 'porters where yer dun cum from, 'nd how yers bin raised, is yer?"

"Look at that, Uncle Wash, and see if it reminds you of home?" said Ridgway, tossing a paper to Uncle Wash.

"Oh, now, Mars Steve, yer know I kain't read."

"Of course not, of course not. Well, hand me the paper, and, as Shakespeare says:

" 'I will a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Will harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their sphere,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end.' "

"Good Gawd! Am it as bad as dat, Mars Steve?"

"Here is a picture of how I used to look and toil down on the farm. What do you think of that? Do you recognize the present Hon. Stephen Ridgway?"

"In de papers, Mars Steve; sho'ly not in de public papers? (Looking at the paper intently.)

What! Dat tow-haid boy wid bare laigs 'nd dat rag on?" questioned Uncle Wash.

"Dat am a lie, Mars Steve, coz yer never wuz no po' white trash like dat, and didn't hab to ho' no corn wid nuthin' on cep'n a shirt. What der printin' under dat lie say, now?"

"Stephen Ridgway, the undecorated farmer boy," read Ridgway.

"What's dat pictur in de udder corner, wid de man in der uniform 'nd all the people er bowin' 'nd er scrap'n?"

"That, Uncle Wash—so says the artist—is 'The New American Aristocracy paying court to their founder—the Hon. Stephen Ridgway, M. C.'"

"Umph! Dat's what de white folks calls 'play'-cetious,' ain't it—kin'er make b'leve?"

"Yes, that's what the newspapers call having fun with a fellow," replied Steve.

"Say, Mars Steve, des us git er way frum dis place purty quick."

"Why, I thought you didn't want to leave, Uncle Wash?"

"Dere's serus trubl' confrunt'n us, Mars Steve, coz fust thing we knows dem paper folks 'll be picturin' me 'nd you eat'n' possum tergether 'nd den, bless de Lawd, what we gwine ter do—we kain't go home no mo'?"

"Well, well, Uncle Wash, that's a danger I hadn't thought of," replied Ridgway, laughing.

"Sumbody's at de doah; mus' I let 'em in, sah?"

"Yes. I suppose it's another reporter."

"Well, Steve," exclaimed Ned, "this is joy unconfined. Why after the strenuous times you have

been having one would think you wouldn't feel like laughing for a month."

"Oh, I was just enjoying Uncle Wash and his humor. How are you, Ned?"

"About pumped dry. Just came from the Capitol, where I have been besieged all the morning by members and reporters, who must have gotten wind of that affair at the house yesterday. I suppose Van Horn thought it was too good to keep, for of course Billinsgate wouldn't dare make a row now. However, the Associated Press may have had an inkling of the true situation. Have any of the press been to see you this morning?"

"Oh, slews of them, but I have been too busy packing for an interview. You see I am in a position now to respectfully decline to talk, as my public career has been so effectually killed that a few more shots won't do any harm, if they are inclined to waste them on a carcass."

"Steve, I am sorry you have taken this step. Why not reconsider? You need not fear Billinsgate's influence against you after last night, as the sword you have hung over his head will make him exceedingly quiet for a long time to come."

"Even if I were inclined to reconsider, Ned, it would be too late, as I wired the State Committee after leaving your house last night that my resignation would be tendered at once; and I so informed the press this morning.

"It is not the predicament that I have gotten myself into that I fear to face, but I realize the fact that I am not diplomatically fitted to fill a representative's place at the present time. When a bill is introduced which I believe to be, and which is,

for the best interests of the people, I am not allowed to vote for it if it be a Republican measure; and if the bill originates with our side I have to vote for it regardless of what I believe or be read out of the party.

"No, Ned, I shall retire until I have toned down, or Congress has toned up; and, as Uncle Wash says, 'the quicker the better, if we want to stay at home after we get there."

"Careful, Van Horn, we are all torn up, you know," cautioned Steve, as Van Horn entered, stumbling over a pile of books.

"Surely you are not leaving Washington, Mr. Ridgway? How are you, Carter?"

"He who fights and runs away," said Ridgway, laughing.

"But the Senator has such a start you will never catch him. Seriously, Mr. Ridgway, I came as soon as I could get off duty this morning, to thank you in the name of the Army and in my own behalf, for the action you took yesterday against Senator Billinsgate, and to ask your permission to make public at the Army and Navy Club the affair of last night, that they, as well as the President, may know the obligations they are under to you."

"Indeed, Steve, it is a favor to the people whom this man represents to expose him as the cowardly blackguard he has proven himself," insisted Carter.

"No, no, gentlemen. You would not advise this if you will think a moment, and you will agree with me that this is a personal matter to be kept from the public."

"A gemmen in de parlor to see you, sah," announced Uncle Wash. "Yah's de card."

"You will excuse me a moment, both of you—a man from the *Herald,*" said Ridgway.

"Oh, damn! Carter, what am I to do?" asked Van Horn as soon as Ridgway left the room.

"To do! About what?"

"About this Billinsgate affair. As you know, I am on detail at the White House, and this morning when Billinsgate's statement came out, of course everybody was dumbfounded and wondered what could have induced him to make this apology through the press. No one believed it was voluntary.

"Well, I thoughtlessly told the whole affair to the President's secretary. Shortly afterward the President sent for me."

"The President sent for you?"

"Yes, and asked for an account of the matter, which I, of course, gave him. Now Mr. Ridgway asks that I say nothing about it. What am I to do?"

"How was that for a quick interview?" queried Steve, coming in suddenly.

"You couldn't have said much; that we can vouch for, can't we, Van Horn?"

"I only confirmed what I have previously stated—that my resignation would be handed in at once."

"You are not going, Van Horn?"

"Yes, I report at twelve. Carter, can I see you after six this evening?"

"Do, by all means; join me at the Shoreham for dinner at eight."

"Mr. Ridgway, I will see you to-morrow evening at Senator Roskin's."

"You are going, of course, Steve?" said Ned.

"Oh, yes! One more whirl, as you fellows say, before I go back to the large and lucrative practice the country papers so graciously announced that I was sacrificing to serve my country. Ned, do you realize that I now belong to that class of noted and distinguished congressmen who resign their seats to take up a large law practice again?"

"Steve, does Katherine Norris know of your intention to resign? Pardon such an impertinent question, won't you, old man, but I know how interested she is in your career."

"Yes, Miss Norris has done me the honor to interest herself in my success—or failure—although she has given me to understand that it is only speculative."

"Then you have spoken to her?"

"Of my resignation? No."

"Seriously. You understand. Of course I haven't any right in the world to ask except on the grounds of my sincere friendship for you both. You know, as it is generally known in the set here, that I have been one of the many admirers of Katherine Norris. I know that she has a very high regard for you, and if you stay in Washington and fight it out, it may mean more than a political victory."

"And if I stay and fail?"

"Well, a woman loves the power and position that comes to a man as much as he. Katherine Norris has lived amidst environments which have taught her what these two factors mean in the social world, and each day of her life has been spent toward that end. She will marry the man whose future promises her this pedestal."

"But—if he should fail? There is such a thing you know, Ned."

"With these two inspirations—power and a woman's love—a man can't fail."

"Then, in this case, it is not fighting for a woman's love, but to satisfy her ambition."

"You are too severe, Steve; it is but human for a woman to glory in and participate in the honors won by the man she marries, as it is divine for her to comfort and sustain him in his failures, which I will admit is not always the case in the higher social planes of to-day.

"With women, whose education and surroundings are demanding luxuries and a position that requires wealth to sustain, they become necessarily mercenary and careful to that degree which, in their sphere, has practically eliminated that sentiment and personal sacrifice that we find in the lower strata and rural districts. It is practically the same fight with the educated and ambitious woman as it is with the man of this type—a fight for social and moneyed supremacy—conditions which have given us the marriages of convenience."

"If this is true, then I am glad that I am gravitating back to the rural districts, where they measure love and happiness by the standard of our forefathers. But I hope that I have misjudged Miss Norris."

"She would not mislead you, I am sure, as I have often heard her express these sentiments; and I have no doubt that she would speak to you in the same way."

"I hope not, old fellow, as I want to leave Washington with as few ideals shattered as possible."

"You are determined to leave, then?"

"Yes, and besides (laughing) you know Uncle Wash and I have a new danger to anticipate, which makes it imperative that we leave at once or the citizens' committee will wait on us as soon as we get home."

"What's the fun anyway, Steve? I remember that you were in a jolly good humor when I came in."

"Oh, I had just been explaining to Uncle Wash a cartoon in the morning paper of the Hon. Stephen Ridgway engaged in agricultural pursuits in prehistoric days, which aroused an apprehension in the old darky's mind that some bright artist might cartoon us at dinner, tête-à-tête, or robbing a hen-roost together, which would disturb our respective standings in the home community; and which would lead to an ultimatum from the neighbors. Uncle Wash advises therefore, that we get home at once."

"Steve, does anything ever affect the good humor of you happy-go-lucky Southerners?"

"Only two things that I ever heard of, Ned—an empty stomach and interference with State rights. One leads to work and the other to fight; about the only two things, I reckon, that ever upset the apple cart."

"Well, speaking of work reminds me that it is about time for me to get to mine. The House will convene in a few moments. Won't you go over?"

"No, I will stay and help Uncle Wash with the packing."

"Come over to the Capitol and lunch with me at two. Good-bye! You will come?"

"Yes—at two. Wash! Uncle Wash!" called Ridgway.

"Comin', sah!"

"You may go on with the packing."

"Yas, sah, Mars Steve."

CHAPTER XII.

"YAS, SAH, MARS STEVE, DAT WURD SHO' MEANS TR'UBLE."

STEPHEN RIDGWAY turned toward the window of his apartments overlooking the Capitol grounds to see the towering, athletic figure of his friend, Carter, as he made his way cautiously along the wet, slippery pavements, banked on either side by huge piles of melting snow, fast disappearing under the warm sun of the first bright day in weeks.

Watching him until he was lost among the crowd of rushing, hurrying sightseers, who were climbing the great steps leading into the vestibule of the Capitol in all eagerness to find seats in the already overfilled galleries, he then turned his eyes aloft to the great dome to see the flag unfurled, as the bells about the city rang the noon-day chimes; and which signaled the opening of the daily session. This already familiar picture came before him now, and he saw again the Speaker rise to let fall the few faint raps of the gavel, and the blind chaplain raise his hands and lift his voice in the simple words of invocation, while an impressive silence fell upon the whispering galleries, and every member arose and stood with bowed head in reverence to their God; and in respect to the emblem of their

country that hung in graceful folds above the Speaker's chair.

All this he had lost, but this was not the half; beyond lay the city, and there the woman, the one thing in life he most cared for. Why had he thrown his one chance away? Why had he given up all of this? What devil's spur was in his brain that drove him to his destruction? Other men have opinions and prejudices, yet sink them into oblivion where their happiness is at stake. Why couldn't he serve his party as Billinsgate and the bosses dictated? But here a hard, set look came upon his face, the muscles about his mouth became strained and the fire of battle came into his eyes as he shrugged his shoulders and turned from the window, startling Uncle Wash as he muttered audibly: "Damned if I will!"

"Mars Steve," said Uncle Wash, "wuz yer speak'n ter me?"

"Yes, Uncle Wash, I did want to ask you a question," replied Ridgway, his angry mood passing rapidly away: "Does impetuousness ever get you into trouble?"

"Now, Mars Steve," said Uncle Wash, "I kin answer yer question, 'nd I kain't, but if er nigger said dat kiner lang'age ter me it's sho' gwine ter git him inter tr'uble. If yer'll tell me what dat wurd 'mpetousness means in nigger talk, I spec I kin give yer sum splanation."

"It's like this, Uncle Wash," explained Ridgway, "saying or doing the first thing that comes into your mind—acting on the spur of the moment."

"I member der only time I ever had use fer dat

wurd, Mars Steve; it wuz one time 'way long fo' de war. It had been rainin' 'nd rainin' 'nd Ole Mars say one mornin': 'Wash, you 'nd Pete take er mule 'nd go down to de lower place 'nd fix up dem fences 'long der creek.'

"'Yas, Ole Mars,' says I, 'nd I gits Pete 'nd der mule 'nd start on down dar, but fo' long we comes ter de river ford 'nd 'twuz pow'ful high. I seed dar wuz tru'ble 'nd we sho' haf ter swim dat mule, 'nd I sez ter Pete: 'You ride 'nd tote my close (coz he cuddn't swim nohow) 'nd I'd swim wid der mule.' Well, Mars Steve, we near half way cross, when Pete 'nd dat ar mule git er way frum me. I yells ter Pete to hol' his haid up, but dat fool nigger gits skeared 'nd fall off, while der mule he go on down de stream. Den I reckon I had ter act on dat wurd, 'nd so I grabs Pete and takes him back ter de bank; when fo' Gawd, Mars Steve, I look fur dat mule, he dun drownded.

"When I gits back ter de Great House de debil wuz ter pay, sho' nuf.

"Ole Mars, he sez: 'Wash, whar dat mule?' I sez: 'Ole Mars, he dun drowned.' Ole Mars he don't say nuthin' fur 'bout er minit, den he sez: 'Whar's Pete?' I spoke up kiner glad like 'nd sez: 'He's down ter de cabin alrite, sah.'

"Den Ole Mars 'gin ter cuss. 'What!' he sez, 'yer let mah mule drown ter sabe dat no 'count nigger?' Den I tell yer, Mars Steve, der air wuz sulfurus, 'nd I ain't dun acted on der 'mpuls uv de moment no mo', coz if I'd 'liberated er minit I'd er 'membered dat fool Pete warn't no 'count no how. Yas, sah, Mars Steve, dat wurd sho' means tr'uble.

"Mars Steve, am dis der re'son we gwine back ter Tennessee; is yer dun bin too 'mpulsiv?"

"I reckon you are right, Uncle Wash," answered Ridgway, who had regained his good humor after his hearty laugh at Uncle Wash and his story. "In plain language, Uncle Wash," continued Steve, "I have talked too much."

"Ain't dat yer bizness?" innocently inquired Uncle Wash. "I thought dat's what dey sent yer up heah fur."

"Yes," replied Steve, as he put on his coat and hat preparatory to going to the Capitol, "but my impulses led me to try to save the nigger and I forgot all about the mule.

"I am going over to the House, and if any of my newspaper friends call give them your definition of impetuousness, or tell them anything, just so you don't tell them where to find me," instructed Steve, as he went out.

"Humph!" grunted Uncle Wash as he closed the door behind Ridgway—"tryin' ter save de nigger when he oughter bin ridin' de mule."

Ridgway rushed rapidly across the square into the Capitol grounds careless of the hurrying carriages and swiftly moving automobiles, to soon find himself elbowing his way through the crowds standing beneath the great dome. Turning to the left he passed on with the noisy, jostling crowd in the corridors and up to the great swinging doors that led into the chamber—here the doorkeeper nodded to him pleasantly—he had previously to show a member's card, but such is one day of fame—and he passed within long enough to see that Carter's chair was vacant and to hear the Gentleman from Texas

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—who had the floor—say that he was rising to a personal privilege to answer the attack the Gentleman from Tennessee had made upon him the day before.

Coming out he passed around and into the lobby, where in a few moments he saw Carter, and they soon made their way down into the café and sat down at a small table by themselves.

"I am a bit early, Ned," said Steve, after they had given their order, "but after you left all the spirit in me seemed to be urging me to stay and fight it out, and so I hurried over here to get rid of the folly."

"Call it folly if you will, Steve," responded Carter, "but your folly has made you the most talked about man in Congress. Stay here, mellow down a little, be conservative, as the Senator says, and with the reputation you have as an orator and a thinker—although your opinions and expressions have antagonized men of the Billinsgate type—you will soon win the recognition and respect of the better element in Congress. This morning several Senators and a Cabinet Member, who stands closest to the President, expressed a desire to meet you. But if that doesn't satisfy you, listen to this:

"I am reliably informed that a certain young lady and her father were in the galleries yesterday, and they were pleased beyond expression with your speech. I overheard Mr. Du Mauriac say it was a splendid effort, and his daughter—well, Miss Du Mauriac said very sweetly, 'Do you think so, father?'—and blushed profusely."

"Is this honest, Ned?" asked Ridgway, flushing perceptibly.

"The gospel truth, Steve, and—now will you reconsider your determination to resign?"

"I expect to call on Miss Du Mauriac this afternoon, Ned," said Steve, unthinkingly, "simply to thank her for her kindness, you know," he added, seeing the smile on Carter's face.

"Oh, certainly," replied Carter, sighing, "these duty calls must be made, of course, but—suppose you ask her what she thought of your speech. One thing sometimes leads to another," laughed Carter.

"Oh, here you are, Ridgway!" exclaimed the senior Senator, as he came up and joined them.

"Sit down, Senator, and have coffee with us," invited Carter.

"Never drink it. Bring a glass of milk," said the Senator to the waiter, as he sat down.

"So, Ridgway, you rode a steeplechase right through the House yesterday," began the Senator. "Well, my boy, I was there, and right glad I was to see you take the hurdles without a fall."

"Were the hurdles built on conservatism?" laughingly asked Ridgway.

"Oh ye of little faith," rebuked the Senator, "wait until the fall comes, and then an old man's advice will come back to you."

"I beg your pardon, Senator, it is not forgotten," apologized Ridgway.

"At any rate, my boy, I am glad Carter didn't forget to send for me. But both of you come with me," invited the Senator, as they arose from the table.

"They have heard of you on our side, Ridgway, and I want you to meet some of the senators."

"I suppose I go along as the lion's keeper," joked Carter, as they followed the Senator out.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DU MAURIACS—THE SAME AFTERNOON.

"We were at Ned Carter's yesterday afternoon, Julia, and I had such a jolly time with the new secretary. He's all right, all right," announced Dorothy.

"All right, all right!! Goodness, Dorothy, aren't you ever going to give up those vulgar expressions? I wish you would."

"But, Julia, they are so expressive, and don't require any mental effort. Now, when I said that Mr. Morris was all right, all right, I meant——"

"Yes, dear."

"Why, I meant; oh, I meant that he was a good fellow—bon comrade—as you would say, easy to get acquainted with, and all that."

"And you met him yesterday for the first time?"

"Yes, you know I haven't been to see Ned before."

"How long did you talk to Mr. Morris—before you felt that you knew each other quite well, or, all right, all right, as you express it?"

"Oh, about twenty minutes, I reckon. He was showing me Ned's collection of old pottery, that he has been digging up for the last two years, while Katherine Norris and Ned were gossiping in his den."

"Then Katherine went with you to call on your cousin?"

"Oh, yes, it was she who suggested it. You know she is very much interested in Mr. Ridgway; and she wanted to find out from Ned if he was going to resign."

"To resign?"

"Yes, give up his seat in Congress and return home, you know."

"But why should he resign?"

"Why, haven't you heard? Didn't you see the papers yesterday? His bosses have called for his resignation, so Mr. Morris told me. He and Senator Billinsgate almost came to blows in the lobby yesterday, and Mr. Morris says that Senator Billinsgate will not rest until he has compelled him to give up his seat."

"And does Mr. Morris think he will resign?"

"No, indeed. He says that Mr. Ridgway will fight the very Dev——ah, hem—old Nick, himself, but that he is very much cut up over the newspaper criticisms of his speech, and they may finally drive him out. If Katherine Norris has the influence over him that all Washington believes her to have, he will never resign. Katherine loves a row, you know, and they say Mr. Ridgway is very much in love with her, so, of course, he won't think of leaving Washington. He knows by this time, I'll wager, that he has to succeed in public life or he will never get Katherine Norris. You like Mr. Ridgway, don't you, Julia?"

"Yes, dear, but why do you ask that question?"

"Sometimes I fancy that he likes you better than he does Katherine. One sees him here so

often, and I have never met him at the Norrises, although for that matter, Katherine is never at home long enough for anybody to call."

"Have you seen her to-day?"

"No, not since last night at the Arlington."

"Was Mr. Ridgway or Cousin Ned there?"

"N-no, I think not."

"Julia."

"Yes, dear."

"Do you—ah—remember seeing Mr. Van Horn?"

"Yes. I think he came in very late—in fact, just as I was leaving."

"Oh! I hate him!"

"Why, Dorothy, I thought you two were the best of friends."

"But he was to meet me yesterday at Ned Carter's, and let me know if he could take me to the Arlington dance—so I refused Mr. Page—and did not get to go. Oh, I simply hate him."

(Servant showing in Lieutenant Van Horn.)

"We were just speaking of you, Mr. Van Horn, Dorothy and I," said Julia.

"Yes, Mr. Van Horn, Julia and I were wondering if you had left town," said Dorothy, giving him the tips of her fingers.

"Miss George, may I see you alone for a moment?" he said, in an aside.

"No, sir."

"No, Miss Du Mauriac," announced Van Horn, "I am not leaving until the first."

"Then you are going away?"

"Yes, I am ordered to join my regiment in Colorado on the first."

"Isn't this quite sudden, Mr. Van Horn?" anxiously inquired Dorothy.

"Things always come that way in the Army, you know. But orders are made to be obeyed."

"Well, I am losing all my friends at one time, it seems. You go away in a little while, Julia, do you not?"

"Yes, father and I go to the Virginia Hot for the Easter holidays."

"Poor Mr. Page and I will have to put up with each other the rest of the season, I suppose," said Dorothy musingly.

"I am sure Mr. Page won't object, Dorothy," said Julia.

"Oh, Harry Page and I are very congenial; and we enjoy dancing together so much.

"Julia, would you mind showing us the kodaks you brought from the West last summer? I am sure Mr. Van Horn would like to look through them, as he is going west soon."

"Why, of course, Dorothy, I will have the maid bring them."

"Oh, never mind, dear, don't trouble."

"No—but perhaps I had better go, as I know just where to find them."

"Oh, Julia, please, if you don't mind."

"Now, Mr. Van Horn, as we are alone, you have the opportunity to explain, but I must say if you are as absent-minded in obeying orders as you are in keeping your engagements—well—I see a court-martial waiting for you."

"Dorothy, I swear that I was at your cousin's ten minutes after you and Miss Norris had gone.

You know that I can't leave the White House before six—if you had only waited."

"It seems to me, sir, that you might have followed, knowing where I had gone."

"But, Dorothy, I was detained at Mr. Carter's until it was too late."

"The usual number of 'Hows and Highballs,' of course," pouted Dorothy.

"Honestly, Dorothy, it was a very serious matter, and if you only knew, I am sure you would accept it as a reasonable excuse."

"Suppose you let me be the judge of that after I have heard it."

"I can't tell you, Dorothy. I am in honor bound; and if I were not, I couldn't tell you."

"Very well, sir, if your secret is more to you than my—ah—friendship, then don't."

(Servant entering, followed by Mr. Ridgway.)

"I am not interrupting a council of war, I trust, Miss Dorothy," apologized Ridgway.

"On the contrary, Ridgway, your coming is very timely for me," exclaimed Van Horn. "Miss George is threatening 'court-martial,' dismissal from the service, and all sorts of terrible things for not obeying orders. You can help me, I am sure."

"You make a mistake, Mr. Van Horn, as I don't remember having given you any orders," corrected Dorothy.

"True, I am mistaken, Ridgway. The fact is, I hoped to meet Miss Dorothy at her cousin's yesterday at six, and I was so unfortunate as to be late. As you remember, I was detained until seven at Congressman Carter's for a very good reason;

and which I cannot give Miss George. You will vouch for that, I am sure."

"Miss George, I can assure you that it was only a personal matter concerning me which prevented Mr. Van Horn from keeping his engagement, and in explaining himself into your good graces again. Mr. Van Horn did me a very great service by remaining—which he did at my request," Stephen Ridgway explained. "It is I, therefore, who owe you an apology."

"Then I forgive Mr. Van Horn, and am glad he was of some service to you," gracefully acknowledged Dorothy.

"Here you are, Dorothy," said Julia, handing her the kodaks.

"Mr. Ridgway, I am glad to see you," greeted Julia.

"I think we can get a better light in the conservatory," said Van Horn to Dorothy, in an undertone.

"Julia, dear, I am going to take Mr. Van Horn to see the plants that were sent you from Arizona. They are so western, you know."

"Very well, dear," assented Julia. "Mr. Ridgway, I know you have been overwhelmed with congratulations on your speech of Wednesday, but this is the first time I have seen you, and I hope you will accept mine."

"On the contrary, Miss Du Mauriac, the criticisms and comments have been so uncomplimentary and vitriolic that any commendation is a balm to one's wounded vanity."

"I have seen the press comments, which I think the greatest compliment that could be paid you."

"But, unfortunately for me, they make public opinion; and make it so fast and so strenuously that those who sent me here have already called for my resignation."

"But you can ignore them."

"No man in public life is strong enough to battle against an hysterical outbreak like that which confronts me."

"Surely, they are not powerful enough to retire you before the next session."

"No—but conditions are such in the House that no man can get anything unless he is in harmony with his party, and it would be impossible for me to do anything for my district—in fact, it would be useless for me to attend a session, as I could not get recognition in debate. Hence, I have tendered my resignation and leave Washington this week.

"And I could not leave without thanking you for the pleasures socially you have given me, and the pleasure in having known you. All of my life, since I have been old enough to know that outside of the narrow, restricted existence in the little town from which I came, the world has its circles of brilliant men and women living amidst wealth and environments in keeping and in harmony with their lives, I have wished and longed for associations with these people—contrary to what I have believed and argued best for the position into which I was born, and which I could only hope to sustain from my worldly possessions. These ambitions led to that for which I knew I was unfitted. Through sacrifices of a small property which I had inherited I was enabled to take up the study of law at Harvard where I met Ned Carter; and whose name

could have been the 'open sesame' to the doors into the world for which I longed, but I had not the means or the courage at that time. I knew that a few months of this life would totally unfit me for the life I had left behind back there in the mountains, and for which I have always had the love strong within me.

"These conflicting states—that of a love for the soil upon which I was born, and a longing for a different world—led me to take up the line of thought I have; and evolve theories which I now know to be impractical, and perhaps not for the best after all. Then I felt, as he who has said, 'Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise,' but I am beginning to doubt—to doubt but after all if it isn't better to follow where one's ambition leads—even if it may bring disappointments, discontentment, and unhappiness. That it is better to have striven for the goal and fallen by the wayside than to lead a life of blissful ignorance."

"But why go back to the old life? Even if you must resign your seat, why not take up your work here in Washington; or better—come to New York. Father has many friends there, and——"

"I thank you, Miss Du Mauriac, but I must go back to Tennessee, back to the people from whence I came; and live back to the place I once held.

"True, I can never expect anything more in the way of a public career—in fact, the place I am now giving up never came from the people of my district, or through any effort of mine. I was only a compromise between two warring factions, my nomination an accidental one—simply the fortune which knocks at every man's door once in a life-

time; and mine, could I have had any foundation to build upon other than the idle dreams of the yesterday which I might have known would never be tolerated by the American people; but which like Banquo's ghost—would not down.

"And now when everything tells me that I have no right—no hope—I cannot help telling you that you have come into my life, into my heart to live there forever. That it is leaving you, giving you up that is hardest for me. I wanted you so, I was ambitious to come into public notice, to do something that would bring me honor and a name in this world of yours. Then to come and ask you to share it with me; and now I have thrown away this opportunity because my feelings, my prejudices—if you will—were so intense, so uncontrollable that I must sacrifice all for a few idle dreams."

"And if you had not, I would not have cared for you as I do. The name of Stephen Ridgway is honorable enough for me; and his future I will gladly share."

"Julia—Julia, is this true?"

"Yes, every word of it."

"And you will go back to the mountains with me?"

"Anywhere, Stephen, and besides,—you know the mountains are nearer Heaven."

"Shall we find Dorothy and Mr. Van Horn?" suggested Julia, as she heard some one coming toward the drawing-room with her father.

CHAPTER XIV.

A FRIEND TO HIS EXCELLENCY.

"HAVE you seen the President, to-day, Senator?" asked Du Mauriac, as he and Senator Roskin came in.

"Yes, this morning at my own solicitation; and this afternoon a message came asking me to call at once."

"Then he has decided to appoint our man."

"No. I am sorry to report that the President will not give us the Consulship, Du Mauriac."

"But a few days ago he had almost decided upon our man; how do you account for this change? What influence have we overlooked that the other people have brought to bear?"

"None, sir, he still favors our man in preference to any of the other candidates."

"Oh! Then he will not make the appointment for the present."

"On the contrary, the appointment was made this afternoon; and the President himself delegated me to deliver this note requesting the man to whom it is addressed, as a personal favor, to accept the American Consulship at London."

"Isn't this an unusual proceeding, Senator?"

"Unusual? Well, you know the present head of the nation does many things that are not routine politics, but in the end has proven for the best interest of the country.

"However, the question of politics doesn't enter into this appointment; and the consulship goes to a man on the opposite side. A man, whom knowing what I do, would have been my own choice had the President given me this paper and left it to my pleasure to write the name of the next American Consul to London."

"Are you at liberty to tell me his name?" inquired Du Mauriac.

"As it is only a question of a few moments until you know; and as I have followed him to your house—where I believe he is at present—for the purpose of delivering the President's note, I think I may properly let you see the address."

"The Hon. Stephen Ridgway," read Mr. Du Mauriac. "And you say this is a surprise to him—that he has not asked for the appointment?"

"No—and, of course, knows nothing of it.

"This surprises you, as it did me until I had heard the story from the President—which I don't mind telling you in confidence, and which is too good to keep.

"Of course, you know of Ridgway's unfortunate, or, to say the least, ill-timed speech in the House a few days ago, with which many of us agree but dare not indorse. Two days ago, you remember, Billinsgate astonished the political world by his statement given to the Associated Press apologizing for his persistent and acrimonious attacks upon the President and the Army. This change of heart

in Billinsgate, coming as it did like a lightning flash from a clear sky, startled and puzzled no one more than the President. It was so unlike Billinsgate, that the President realized that some mysterious power, some strong hand had forced him to do this, the only decent act in his Senatorial life.

"Well, you know the President's temperament. He wouldn't have been satisfied until the mystery had been cleared up, but the next morning he accidentally learned in a way which I do not know—that Stephen Ridgway had forced Billinsgate—in the presence of an Army officer and a member of the House—to apologize for these insults, given under the cloak of Senatorial courtesy, to these two branches of the Government.

"And now can you wonder that the President should choose such men to fill the highest places and uphold the dignity of the country abroad from those who are willing to fight for her honor at home? Why, sir, if I had a son I would ask no greater blessing than to see him to-day, as Stephen Ridgway is, the lover of right and justice; and the defender of his President, regardless of party affiliation and political sentiment."

"I, too, should have been proud of such a son, Senator. I understand that he has resigned his seat in the House."

"Yes, the press was so severe in its criticisms that the bosses, under pressure from Billinsgate, had no fears in demanding it.

"Ridgway's ideas are good, Du Mauriac, especially those advocating a more judicious and intelligent training for the millions of young minds that are being overburdened and unfitted for their legit-

imate station in life; but any bill tending to restrict or legislate against the higher education of the people, no public man can support.

"As for his position in demanding a respect and reverence for dignity of office, this is vital to our future peace and progress as a free people, but God only knows how we are to accomplish it—certainly not by legislation.

"That some special recognition by title or insignia be given those who achieve or excel in the arts, sciences and letters, or those who make personal or money sacrifices for the good of their fellows—this is unnecessary, for the great God has already stamped upon their brows that which makes them a class unto themselves; and all the constitutional liberties and social equality under the heavens can never place them anywhere else."

"Yes, Senator, these are the inevitable results under any government in the world that has kicked out of its swaddling clothes," affirmed Richard Du Mauriac. "Ridgway is here, shall I send for him? He and my daughter are in the library, I believe."

"Do so, and—Du Mauriac—have Miss Julia come with him." (Du Mauriac ringing.)

(To the maid): "Ask Miss Du Mauriac and Mr. Ridgway to come to the drawing-room."

"Du Mauriac, we are both fathers, and—well, you will pardon an old friend, won't you—but—have you noticed that Ridgway is very fond of coming here—in fact, of course, you have seen that he cares for your daughter."

"N—no."

"But you have no objections to Ridgway—and

you would consent to his serious attentions to your daughter."

"I have always thought well of him, Senator, and now—now I should be very proud of him."

"You sent for me, father?" inquired Julia Du Mauriac, coming into the room.

"Yes, the Senator desires to see Mr. Ridgway, daughter."

"And you, also, Miss Julia," added Senator Roskin.

"You see, I have a little surprise for Mr. Ridgway, and I am sure he would like to have his friends share the pleasure with him."

"A surprise, Senator? I trust not the kind I have been getting for the last few days," said Ridgway, hesitatingly.

"Rather unusual, I should say, Ridgway, since it is a personal note from the President of the United States."

"A note from the President?"

"And who desires a favor," said Senator Roskin, handing Ridgway the note.

"Senator! Impossible, Senator!" exclaimed Ridgway, as he read.

"Julia—read—your pardon, Mr. Du Mauriac."

The White House,
February the twenty-third.

To the Hon. Stephen Ridgway,
Washington.

My Dear Mr. Ridgway:

The American Consulship at London being vacant, and as I am embarrassed with aspiring candidates, I rely upon you to stick by me now as you

have upon other occasions and relieve me from the dilemma by accepting the Post for yourself. In fact, I command it, and hence I know you will not refuse. (Signed) THE PRESIDENT.

"Well, Ridgway, what answer shall I take to 'His Excellency'?"

"There is only one, Senator, when the President commands."

"Mr. Du Mauriac, I have addressed your daughter in a manner which you, no doubt, think calls for an explanation. Sir, I have only waited the opportunity to ask——"

"No more, Mr. Ridgway; my daughter's pleasure in your good fortune assures me; and I rejoice with you—my heartiest congratulations, sir," added Du Mauriac.

"Ridgway, if you will pardon an old man's blunt speech," spoke up Senator Roskin, "I would like to say that you are a darn poor politician but a damn good citizen."

"Du Mauriac, would you mind giving me a few moments in the library—on very important business—you know."

"But, Julia, I can't go alone. Will you come?" asked Ridgway, after they had gone.

"Yes, dear, but we would have been very happy in the mountains."

"May we come in," cried Dorothy, from behind the portières.

"Ridgway, the Senator has just told us," announced Van Horn.

"Isn't the President great? Oh, if old Billins-

gate only knew—I wonder where a Marconi would catch him?"

"I congratulate you, Ridgway."

"And I thank you, Van Horn, for I suspect I am indebted to a certain young Army officer for the appointment."

"Is it really true, Julia?" inquired Dorothy.

"You mean Mr. Ridgway's appointment—yes."

"Oh, I know—but the other? Yes? Oh, you dear. But, Julia, I am, too."

"Really?"

"Yep, I am a new recruit—go to the cavalry, you know."

"Mr. Ridgway, you haven't been to say good-bye. I hear you are going back to Tennessee," said Katherine Norris, as she and Ned Carter were shown in.

"Not now, Miss Norris," replied Ridgway.

"You have resigned your seat in Congress, Ned tells me."

"Oh, Katherine, have you and Cousin Ned heard of Mr. Ridgway's appointment? He is our next —or rather I should say—our present Consul General to London," greeted Dorothy George.

"What's this, Steve, I haven't heard?"

"Nor I until a few moments ago, Ned."

"Katherine, would you like to read the President's orders? Orders are made to be obeyed in the Army, aren't they, George?" said Dorothy, demurely, handing Katherine the President's note.

(Katherine Norris re-reading the President's note aloud.)

"Steve, you are the luckiest man in Washington," congratulated Ned.

"Because he is a friend to 'His Excellency,' Mr. Carter," said Van Horn.

"God bless the President!" exclaimed Carter, reverently.

"When do you sail, Mr. Ridgway?" inquired Katherine Norris.

"I don't know. When do we sail, Julia?" he asked.

THE END.





CIRCULATING